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Beatrice

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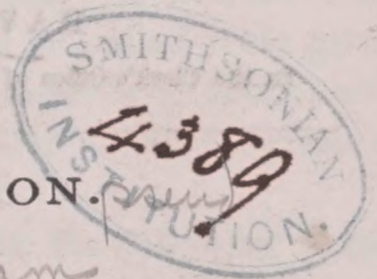
GREATNESS
IN
LITTLE THINGS:

OR,
WAY-SIDE VIOLETS.

BY

RUTH VERNON.

Stepford J. Ram



"Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand—
Make the mighty ocean,
And the beautiful land.

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P R E F A C E.

It may, perchance, have frequently presented itself to the minds of reflecting persons, that it is not always those things, which are held in the highest estimation in the world, that are really the most valuable: that many of those men, who have, by their actions, rendered themselves conspicuous on the great stage of life, have not always been among those who can be called truly great, when comparing their deeds, and motives of action, with that standard of Divine Truth, which has been given as a guide to men by an all-wise Lord.

It has been the writer's aim, in the following simple tale, to show that true greatness does not consist only in shining deeds of prowess, or in carrying out the schemes of a lofty ambition; but that it may be exhibited just as truly when performing, with humility, firmness and self-denial, that round of daily duties, those "little things," which may alike be found in the path of all. That this little work may be of some use, in leading the young to form a correct estimate of the standard of heroism and virtue, which they should aim at and admire; that it may prevent some from being led astray by the world's specious applause, and guide them to the Fountain of Truth, is the earnest prayer of their affectionate friend,

RUTH VERNON.

September, 1854.

GREATNESS

IN

LITTLE THINGS.

CHAPTER I.

The daily round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask ;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.—KEBLE.

Her soul, like the transparent air
That robes the hills above,
Though not of earth, encircles there
All things with arms of love.—LONGFELLOW.

“FATHER,” exclaimed Beatrice Evelyn, looking up with an animated countenance, from the book she was reading, “what an extremely false notion most people have of greatness ; it seems to me, that so many of the persons considered in the light of great men by the world, have been very poor heroes ; just forwarding their own selfish purposes, with an uncommon disregard of the legality of the ways and means they employed. Why, I think Henry Martyn was a much greater man than Napoleon, do not you, dear Papa ? it seems much

more noble to give up country and friends and all comforts and luxuries, for a missionary life, than it is to squander thousands of lives for personal ambition."

"Why, I declare, my bonny Bee, you are turning philosopher," said her father, smiling fondly at her, "but I think you are quite right, my child; you know, the Bible tells us that 'he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city,' and we should never take such a false estimate of life, as to think that what makes the greatest eclat in the world is the most useful: a man, yes, and a woman too, may be truly great in performing the simplest duties of life—still some are undoubtedly called to more public exhibitions of greatness of character than others. Washington was a great man because he had noble and true motives for those actions which have gained him such renown, and, what is more, so much love and gratitude. I call our little friend, Bessie Hamilton, great, though in a different way, when she refused the offer of an advantageous and a luxurious home, that she might be able to nurse her sick father and take care of her little motherless brothers and sisters."

"Yes, Papa," said Beatrice, "and I think it harder to bear any harassing and continuous annoyances in daily life, than one down-right trouble, do not you?"

“Well, my dear, you have known very little as yet, thank God, of what you call downright trouble; but I think, certainly, that a person of inferior character of mind, might bear up against the latter, who would be quite overcome under a series of small worries and vexations.”

“Papa, thinking of what is good and beautiful seems to help one to see these trials in their right light; when we think of them only as permitted and probationary—just every one of them needed to purify us for a higher and purer existence—we can give them their proper place in the scale of importance.”

“You are right, my darling,” said Mr. Evelyn rising, “but I am going out now; it is tolerably cool, the sun is nearly setting—so I will stroll down to the public library and get a book to read, for I finished mine this morning.”

“Well do, Papa, and I will go into the conservatory and water my flowers, they will need refreshing after this hot day.”

Her father's retreating footsteps were heard down the staircase and through the hall, and Beatrice ran lightly across the room into the conservatory which adjoined it. Oh the flowers! what sweet, gentle ministers of love and goodness they are; how many sad hearts have been lightened—how many care-

worn faces received a ray of sunshine when gazing on their soft petals and inhaling their sweet perfume ; and in a city-life, which was that of Beatrice Evelyn, they seem doubly welcome and dear, when the hum and bustle, and driving and jostling of the world without, press so palpably on the senses all day long, that they seem yet more innocent and precious by the contrast. Beatrice tripped lightly among these, her treasures, refreshing their leaves from a little green watering-can, which was her especial property, and ever and anon confining a tendril which was straying too wantonly from its parent stem, or removing those flowerets which had parted with their beauty and freshness to successors as lovely as they had been. And very fair and pleasant she looked herself, as she bent down among the plants, and lovingly pressed her lips against a fresh mossrose-bud. Beatrice was just the sort of girl calculated to win love from those around her ; she had a gentle winning softness of manner, and a face that one loved at first sight, not so much for its striking beauty as for the sweetness of its expression. How true it is, "The light of the body is the eye," and no one, that looked into her dark-gray eyes, could fail to discern high-souled intellect and depth of thought. Of middle height, somewhat, perhaps, above the average, her delicately rounded figure

showing to advantage, in a simple white dress, and her rich brown hair simply braided, she stood a flower among the flowers.

Beatrice Evelyn was the daughter of a retired merchant in New York; a man who had found time, amidst the distractions of business, to give a due share of attention to the duties of Christianity, to literary pursuits, and to the education of his family. Although feeling that even in business, what we do, should be done with all our might, and being, in consequence, esteemed among his brother merchants as a man of punctual habits and scrupulous accuracy in mercantile affairs, he was far from wishing to make money for money itself; what he acquired he considered as a talent to be employed in the service of God, whether in procuring comforts for his family, or in promoting His cause in a more direct manner.

Mr. Evelyn felt that to acquire means to lavish them on luxurious equipages and fashionable living, was inconsistent with his profession as a Christian, and was productive, beside, of no real happiness. He strove to be independent, as far as might be, of the world's opinion, and when his acquaintances said to each other, how extraordinary it was of Evelyn, not to live in a finer house, and keep up a larger establishment, when he was so well off, they little thought how much happier he was in being

free from the trammels of fashion ; and that possessing, as he did, that “ peace which passeth understanding,” and a superiority to the things of time—his money brought him far more real satisfaction than it did to those who paraded their means in “ the world’s gay, garish show.”

Some years before our story commences, he had retired from business, shortly after the death of a beloved wife, whose loss affected him deeply. He sorrowed not as those that have no hope, for he felt that they had both been bought with the same price and were fellow-heirs of a blissful eternity. The loss, however, of one who has been the dearest companion and friend for so many years, must always be a severe trial to a man of deep feeling ; and Mr. Evelyn, having now a sufficient competency, resolved to retire from business and devote himself henceforward to the care of the two motherless little girls his Mary had left him, while his duties as a Christian and a citizen were never neglected. He had some time before, joined one of the Presbyterian Churches in the city, and was both a member and an elder. The number of his deeds of charity are known only to Him for whose sake they were done—a Christian does not his alms to be seen of men. Of his two children, Beatrice was the eldest—Henrietta, the youngest, was still at school, a short distance from the city. Beatrice was always a

thoughtful, meditative child, yet full of feeling and energy; while Hetty was a wild, impulsive creature, small and dark-eyed, and in complexion like a daughter of Italy. Though somewhat deficient in caution and prudence, she was such a warm-hearted, affectionate girl, that her friends were always ready to forgive the errors she so quickly repented of, and so freely confessed. She certainly wanted stability of character, though her high spirits made her the life of the house whenever she was at home for the holidays, and often Beatrice and Mr. Evelyn would drive out on a Saturday afternoon and bring the merry and delighted girl to spend the Sabbath with them all at home. Hetty looked up to Beatrice almost as to a mother, for she suffered her mobile and impulsive nature to submit itself to her sister's guidance; and, beside, Beatrice had arrived at the dignified age of twenty, while Hetty was but fourteen. About a year before this time their family circle had received a not very pleasant addition, in the shape of a widowed sister of Mr. Evelyn's, who had, by the death of her husband, been very greatly reduced in her circumstances, and to whom her brother, in the kindness of his heart, offered a home.

It certainly required some self-denial to do this, for Mrs. Grant was not at all a pleasant or genial person. She was as unlike her brother as possible;

she seemed to bring no sunshine with her, and though she was really a well-informed woman, she was so strongly prejudiced, and of so obstinate and quarrelsome a disposition, that to live with her peaceably was a hard trial. She seemed as if she had stifled in her bosom all the gentler and softer feelings of nature, and generally managed to take a twisted or crooked view of any matter that was the subject of conversation—and yet her friends could make some allowance for all this: her wedded life had been an unhappy one: she had married, late in life, a man who, under protestations of affection, had married her for the little money she possessed, and then treated her with cool neglect. Her heart had never been warmed by the confidence of mutual love; and while she was moping out a vague, purposeless existence in a retired house in one of the Southern States, her temper and disposition became soured. It was one of our friend Beatrice's crosses to bear with all her aunt's vagaries, and to bear them in a Christian manner, thinking of her charitably, and trying to win her over by gentleness and dutiful attentions.

But we left Beatrice among her flowers, which, having duly been watered and admired, she threw herself on a low couch, to refresh herself for awhile with the sweet dreamings of Henry Longfellow:

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We must make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints in the sands of time."

Oh! thought Beatrice, does not that just express what I was saying, this afternoon, to dear Papa? 'we can make our lives sublime.' How I wish that I could live to some purpose—that I might be able to do something to help and comfort some one—I feel as if I could give my life's energies to help the friendless and weak—to do something for God.

The time will come, it will surely come, Beatrice, if you patiently wait; by always picking up the grains that are scattered around us, we may gather a good harvest ere our journey be ended.

"Beatrice! come here, child," cried a shrill voice at the drawing-room door, "I want you in the store-room to arrange the dessert for dinner; you know your father has asked Mr. Chichester to dine with us, and don't, pray, lie dreaming there; I call it real waste of time! you might have been sorting those wools for me, or doing a hundred other things."

"I will come directly, aunt," said Beatrice, gently, "I was only reading—and I will arrange a few flowers in the vases at the same time."

It seems rather hard, thought she, to leave off just in the middle of my comfortable reading, but it is in these little things that we must 'conquer our

spirits'—and Mr. Chichester, too—I wish Papa would not ask him here so often; perhaps being the son of his late partner, he does it out of kindness. Well, it is like him, dear, good man that he is; but Mr. Chichester is still too attentive for it to be pleasant to meet him, and I feel I could never, never like him.

Her aunt had gone down stairs again, and as Beatrice followed her, the above thoughts passed through her mind till she was aroused from her reverie by hearing Mrs. Grant again exclaim:

“Come now, Beatrice, do be quick and arrange these dishes properly, and then you had better go and dress: your father will not like it if you are late for dinner, and, beside, you know your lover, Mr. Chichester, is to be here.”

“He is no lover of mine, aunt, and never will be,” returned Beatrice, “I like him tolerably well as a friend, and I think he is intellectual and gentlemanly, but as anything dearer than a friend I could never think of him for a moment.”

“Just to hear you now, child! why what more would you have; you yourself admit that he is gentlemanly and intellectual—and he has lively manners and is good-looking too, as far as I am any judge of such things.”

“This is all very true, aunt,” said Beatrice, quietly arranging a dish of peaches, “but he does

not satisfy me; he seems to have no principle for his actions; he talks as if he did things because the world thought it right or proper, or because it accorded with his notions of gentlemanly propriety, or else because it gained him the admiration of friends—not because it was his duty as a Christian. I feel he could not be depended upon, under all circumstances; I should not feel sure of him if worldly affairs went wrong or if he were placed in a situation where his duty was opposed to his interests.”

“Dear me, child, who put all this rigmarole of nonsense into your head? where do you think you would ever find a husband who would be such a pink of propriety and goodness as all that? But you are always sticking up for something out of the way; I suppose you think yourself better than any one else, and nothing but a pattern minister would suit you!”

“Indeed, aunt, you are mistaken; I do not think it at all essential that a man should be a minister in order to be a Christian, but I do know that I never will marry any one whom I do not believe to be a child of God: believe me, Aunt Louisa, I do not say this from any feeling of pride, or from wishing to think too highly of myself, but I do think that Christians should be more mindful than they often are, of the injunction of Paul, not to be ‘unequally

yoked together with unbelievers.' I am sure that those who do so suffer their earthly affections to overcome their sense of love to Christ—must suffer many, many miseries and trials from opposition of opinion, and want of mutual sympathy in the best and highest things."

"Well, I am sure, I only hope you may find a husband to your taste," said Mrs. Grant as she turned to leave the store-room. "But I know more of the world than yourself, and what most men are, and I think you will run a great chance of being an old maid, if you are so particular."

"Well, Aunt, I am not such a disbeliever in goodness as all that: I do know enough of the world, to know that there are few men who exactly come up to the standard of what I could admire and love—but still, I believe, there are many who are earnest followers of God, even in their youth—I do not believe in the principle of marrying a man in the hope of converting him; that is often a mere temptation of our own evil hearts, and but too often brings the fruits of bitter repentance with it afterward."

"Well, now let us come and dress for dinner," said Mrs. Grant, "I suppose you mean well, but you have uncommonly queer notions; however, I suppose your father encourages you in them. I

think he is nearly as crazy as yourself, on some points."

"Oh, Aunt!" said Beatrice, as she slowly followed Mrs. Grant up stairs, "I am sure, dear Papa only wishes me to think what is good and right—I wish I were like him!"

CHAPTER II.

Beatrice had scarcely finished dressing when she heard her father's and Mr. Chubb's voices in the hall, and in a few minutes entered the dining-bell room. As she was going down stairs, she met her father just coming out of his room, standing on a little landing between the two flights of stairs.

"Well, my bonny bee," said he, fondly kissing her, "what is my little philosopher looking so grave about! Tell me, my child, isn't everything going smoothly this evening?"

"Yes, dear Papa, tolerably so. I had only been thinking of something Aunt Laura and I were talking about a little time ago. Papa," said she, pausing, "you will never make me do anything contrary to what I wish—I mean contrary to what I think right—with you?"

"No, my dear, certainly not—but what do you mean?"

CHAPTER II.

Who in life's battle firm doth stand,
Shall bear Hope's tender blossoms

Into the Silent Land.—LONGFELLOW

BEATRICE had scarcely finished dressing when she heard her father's and Mr. Chichester's voices in the hall, and in a few minutes afterward the dinner-bell rang. As she was going down stairs, she met her father just coming out of his room, standing on a little landing between the two flights of steps.

"Well, my bonny Bee," said he, fondly kissing her, "what is my little philosopher looking so grave about! eh! Tell me, my child, isn't everything going smoothly this evening?"

"Yes, dear Papa, tolerably so. I had only been thinking of something Aunt Louisa and I were talking about a little time ago. Papa," said she, pausing, "you will never make me do anything contrary to what I wish—I mean contrary to what I think right—will you?"

"No, my dear, certainly not—but what do you mean?"

"O! never mind, Papa," said Beatrice smiling, "now I have your promise;" and she ran quickly down before him till she reached the hall.

"I say, you foolish Bee, to take flight in that way," said Mr. Evelyn as he went down stairs, "come back you little silly thing and speak to me directly." His daughter came back rather reluctantly, and as he looked into her face, he said, "you weren't thinking anything about Mr. Chichester, were you, Bee? Bless you, child, I am not such a foolish man as to wish any child of mine to marry against her inclinations; and I told Chichester as much, this afternoon, as we came along; that after what you said to him the other day, he might consider the matter settled; although we should be happy to receive him as a friend for 'auld acquaintance' sake."

"Thank you, thank you, dear Papa; how shall I ever repay you for all your kind indulgence to me?"

"Indeed, dear one, you are such a treasure to me, that I do not know any man, now, to whom I should be willing to give my bonny Bee, so I must clip her wings, if she wants to fly."

"Indeed, dear Papa, there is no danger, I assure you," said Beatrice laughing, "but let us make haste to the drawing-room—I see Socrates coming to announce dinner."

Respecting the incidents of dinner-time, we shall remark little, except that Mr. Chichester's conversation was unusually agreeable and lively; he seemed to think too well of himself to be willing to believe that Beatrice was indifferent toward him, and hoping still to ingratiate himself with her, he directed all his most lively sallies in that quarter; while poor Beatrice experienced somewhat of that awkwardness of feeling, natural to a young woman, who is still associating with a man who has sought her hand, and been refused.

She was not destined, however, to have to bear with his company and attentions all the evening, for just after dessert was placed on the table, Socrates, their old colored servant, softly opened the door and said that there was a poor woman in the kitchen who wanted to speak with Missy Evelyn.

"Who is it, Socrates," said Mr. Evelyn; "go and see what she wants, and come and tell us."

"Indeed, Missy," said Socrates, when he returned, "it seems quite a *referential* subject-like, as she wants to tell you. She will not 'municate anything, so, perhaps, you would do yourself the favor to step out and see her?"

Smiling at Socrates' eloquence, Beatrice rose, apologizing for leaving the table, and saying she would return as soon as she had seen what the poor woman wanted.

On entering the kitchen Beatrice saw a woman standing by the fire, whose appearance denoted considerable poverty, and whose care-worn countenance plainly told that she had seen more than the *little* ills of life.

“Ah! Biddy, is that you? Why I have not seen you for a long time; why have you never been to see me before?” said Beatrice, after returning the poor Irishwoman’s salutation.

“And sure, Miss, it’s yourself vas good to us in the faver we had, but since my ould man’s took to the say-faring life, it’s meself that’s intirely took up with minding the childers at home and workin’ for them night an’ day, and I would not be beggin’, my swate lady, while I can work. But it’s not for meself I’m come to ye this time. First, Miss, I’ll tell ye that my Pat’s come home from the West Injies: his ship came into harbor yesterday forenoon, an’ faith he’s at home now this blessed minnit, an’ glad enough ve be to see him. And it’s by the marcy of God I ever did see my ould man’s face ag’in, for when the vessel was off the coast of Florida, some vicked wretches there on the shore, my lady, put out a false light to decoy the poor sailors and make ’em think it was a lighthouse, that they might be wrecked, and then the varmints could steal whatever they could lay hands on. Well! to make my story short, the poor ship struck on the rocks,

sure enough, and many of the people in her were dhrowned and among 'em a fine French merchant who was comin' from the island of St—— St——, some o' the blessed saints, Miss —”

“St. Thomas, perhaps, Biddy,” said Beatrice, smiling.

“Sure enough, Miss, an' that's the very word; but as I was going to say, this 'ere poor jintleman had with him a little slip of a daughter, about ten years old, that he was bringin' with him to New York, and the poor little thing was just cast ashore, half dhrowned. My Pat, for pity's sake, took care of her. Well! Miss, somehow or other, they all traveled to some place where another ship was found, which brought them all safe home, (glory be to God!) and here's my Pat brought this poor little foreigner home, and she's now lying in our house on a little bed of my Bessie's, and niver a word of her lingo can we understand; it's a vonder so rich a man didn't have his child taught some dacent tongue — scace one blessed word she says that ve can make out the maning of!”

“Well! I suppose you want me to come and see her, Biddy?” said Beatrice, “perhaps I can make something out of the poor child, and she must be a charge to you.”

“O! niver spake o' that Miss, tho' i' faith I should be glad intirely to know what to do with the little

one. She is just crying fit to break her heart all the time, calling for her Papa, and he lying cold and dead beneath the salt say (God rest his soul in peace!) So if you could kindly come back with me, mistress, darlint, I would thank you kindly."

"Well! Biddy, I must go in and ask Papa, I am afraid it is almost too late to go as far as Hawthorn street to-night, but I will come early in the morning if I cannot come now. But tell me, Biddy, what your husband's surname is, in case we should not find your house easily; it is getting late and you had better not wait, your children will be wanting you."

"Sure, mistress, an' all the world knows Pat Ryan, an' a dashin' fine man he is too," said Biddy, her face lighting up with honest affection. "It's No. 13, Miss, our house is; it's but a poor place to ask the like o' you to come to. Good-night, Miss."

There is as much warm-hearted kindness and self-denying usefulness in Pat's home of poverty, as there is in many rich houses, and far more happiness, too, thought Beatrice, as she re-crossed the hall and opened the door of the dining-room, where they were still sitting at table, awaiting her re-appearance.

"Well! my child, what has detained you so long," said Mr. Evelyn; "I was beginning to fear the beggar-woman was some fairy and had bewitched you away."

"Indeed, Papa, she was no fairy, but poor Biddy Ryan, whom you may remember having relieved several times last winter, when her family were sick with fever;" and sitting down, Beatrice, in a few words, recounted the substance of the poor woman's narration.

"Well! Miss Evelyn," said Mr. Chichester, when she had concluded, "I do not see why, because that sailor is foolish enough to burden himself with that little French child, you should plague yourself about her. Do give us some music this evening, and pray do not think of running away."

"I am sure," returned Beatrice, "that poor Biddy would not have come for me this evening, had she not wanted my assistance and thought that the poor child would be comforted by my going."

"Oh! the poor are always so inconsiderate," said Mr. Chichester, "coming at such a time of the evening as this, just when we were beginning to enjoy ourselves."

"I do not think we have any right to think about enjoying ourselves, when we hear of a fellow-creature in distress," returned Beatrice; "I am sure I should feel much happier, too, if Papa would allow me to go to-night. I can take Jane with me, and Socrates can follow us."

"I will go with you myself, my child," returned her father, "that is, if Mr. Chichester will excuse

us for a few minutes ; the moon is up and the evening air is delightfully cool and pleasant ; the distance is quite short, too."

"O ! pray, do not let me detain you, Mr. Evelyn," said the young man, rising ; "I should be exceedingly sorry to interfere with so philanthropic an errand—" and his tone was slightly piqued as he spoke, for he did not like to perceive that Beatrice so readily sacrificed his company.

"My aunt will entertain you till we come back, Mr. Chichester," said Beatrice, "and you will find the latest numbers of the European magazines lying on the table in the drawing-room, if you choose to look them over."

Mr. Chichester bowed.

"Well ! Beatrice, I suppose you will be bringing some horrid disease or other home with you," said her aunt ; "do, pray, put a piece of camphor in your mouth, and avoid touching those little dirty Irish brats as much as possible. I can't think how people of refinement can bear to go into such places — for my part, I never could !"

"O ! Aunt," said Beatrice, her color rising as she spoke, "how can you say so ? Why did not our Saviour give us a special charge to remember and take care of the poor for His sake ? Surely, we who have received so many of the good things of this life, should be willing to help those who have so

few; and beside, poor Biddy's place, though certainly not furnished in the handsomest manner, is always clean and neat; so clean, that even you would not be afraid to enter it."

"Well! my dear, my vocation does not lie that way. I find enough to do to attend to myself and my own concerns, without meddling with those of other people. But come, Mr. Chichester, let us adjourn to the drawing-room and await the return of these truants."

As Beatrice turned to leave the room, she sighed as she thought that her aunt knew nothing of the true happiness of ministering to the wants of others, and coming out of the little narrow circle of one's own selfish cares and feelings, and participating in the throbs which agitate the pulses of the great world without.

The walk to Hawthorn street seemed but too short; the streets Mr. Evelyn and his daughter had to traverse lay calm in the quiet moonlight, and the few passers-by seemed like ghostly visitants to a world asleep; the part of the city they lived in was quite in the suburbs, and many of the houses had pleasant gardens before and around them, where the flowers were now shedding forth their sweet odors, as if rejoicing in the stillness and the dewy moonlight. Branching off from these streets was a stiff-looking row of tall brick houses, each of which was

tenanted by several families, and in a couple of rooms in one of these, lived Biddy Ryan and her six children. Softly ascending a narrow staircase, Mr. Evelyn tapped at the door, and it was opened with a smile of grateful recognition by Biddy herself, who had her youngest hope in her arms — “Sure an’ it’s mighty good of ye, sir, to be bringing the young lady here to-night,” said she, “but come in, ye must excuse the place looking as it does, but it’s but a small place for eight of us. Pat an’ the six childer an’ meself, beside the little foreigner lady,” and she pointed to a little bed in the corner, where, apart from the other children, lay a delicate-looking little girl, who was staring in much astonishment at the strangers. In a bed made on the floor lay, fast asleep, four rosy little Paddies, the very pictures of health, while the eldest boy stood by his father’s side, near a small table, apparently having been engaged in showing off the progress he had made in learning during his father’s absence. The sailor rose and bowed, and placed a chair for Mr. Evelyn, who entered into conversation with him, while Beatrice approached the little French child’s bed and addressed to her a few words of kindness in her native tongue:—

“Est-ceque vous parlez vraiment ma langue, Mademoiselle. Ah! que j’en suis bien-aise,” said the little one, her dark eyes brightening.

"Yes," replied Beatrice, in French, "but now you must tell me all you want, and you must not cry any more, but be a good child and I will try and make you happy."

"Mais mon pauvre Papa, où est-il donc ? il n'y a personne ici que je connais, et je suis si misérable, ah ! oui, si, si misérable !"

"Your Papa can never come back to you any more, my child," said Beatrice gently, "God has taken him home to another world : but have you no other friends ? try and remember all you can and tell me, and then, perhaps, we may be able to send you back to them some day."

The little girl then explained to Beatrice, in simple language, that her name was Blanche de Tremonille ; that her father had left 'la belle France' about six months before and had come out with her, to reside at the house of a brother, who was a merchant at St. Thomas, with whom he had entered into partnership, and he was going to New York about some business matters when the fatal accident occurred. She said that her mother had died before they left France ; but that her aunt, in the West Indies, was very kind to her and gave her many, many pretty things, and that she had a colored nurse named Jeannette, to wait upon her, who could speak French.

"Mais, Mademoiselle, ces personnes ici sont si

barbares! ah! si barbares! et il fait tant froid dans cette maison! ah! que ferai-je donc?" and she burst into a passion of tears.

"Blanche, Blanche, you must not cry so, that is naughty," said Beatrice, "these poor people have been very kind to you, and taken care of you when you would have been drowned, or, perhaps, perished for want of food. Do you think, if I took you home with me, you would be a good child? You see I can speak your language and so can that gentleman, too," said she, pointing to Mr. Evelyn, "and we will take care of you till we can send you to your aunt—but you must not fret and be discontented."

"Ah! Mademoiselle, je ne pleurai pas; je serai tout-à-fait heureuse avec vous."

After obtaining her father's permission and having a few words of consultation with Pat and his wife, Beatrice arranged that the phaeton should come for little Blanche the following morning, as it was evident that the poor child would never feel at home where she was. So it was settled; and after comforting Blanche with a promise of sending, or perhaps, coming for her herself early in the morning, Beatrice followed her father down the staircase, and they went rapidly home.

We need not enlarge on Mrs. Grant's exclamations of surprise and astonishment, when she heard

that the little French child was to become an inmate of her brother's house—of course, she thought it madness and folly, and a plague and an unheard-of thing, but finding Mr. Evelyn firm on the subject, and, in fact, making very light of the matter altogether, she contented herself at last, with saying, that she washed her hands of it—and would have nothing to do with the child—she would not be plagued with her all day—that Beatrice had brought it upon herself—and as she brewed, so she must bake.

“Well, Aunt, I do not fancy it will be any great charge,” said Beatrice; “she is evidently a gentleman's child, and will know how to behave—and she will be quite an amusement to me, now Hetty is at school.”

Mr. Chichester had been sitting on one of the lounges, reading, when Beatrice and her father entered, and now finding that the little girl's destination seemed disposed of, he begged Beatrice to give them some music.

“Yes do, my darling,” said her father, who was refreshing himself with a cup of coffee after his walk, “give us some of my old favorites, ‘the Last rose of Summer,’ or some airs from Norma.”

“Hem! if Hetty were at home, we might run the chance of getting some good music,” said Mrs. Grant; “I do not like Beatrice's style—it is too slow

and sentimental—I like a good rattling, dashing piece, for my part.”

Beatrice wisely forbore making any reply, and her father smiled fondly at her as she seated herself at the piano, which Mr. Chichester had already opened. She felt ruffled for a moment, but an earnest inward petition made her feel all right again, and the thought rose in her mind, why should I feel annoyed if my music pleases dear Papa? Beatrice sang her father’s favorite song, and several others, before she finished—and a sweet voice she had, soft and melodious—touching the feelings and gratifying the taste: it was the kind of music which seems to do one’s heart good. She had just finished Miss Davis’s beautiful song of ‘Ruth,’ and had risen from the piano, and sat down near her father, when Mr. Chichester said:

“Do you ever attend any of the Catholic churches in the city, on Sundays, Miss Evelyn? I often go there because of the beautiful music.”

“No, I never do,” said Beatrice, “and I own, I should be sorry to spend my Sabbaths in going to a church where I knew that doctrines contrary to my belief would be preached. I am exceedingly fond of good music; but I think Sunday should be spent in serving God; and I should not imagine that attending a Roman Catholic church would conduce to devotional feelings.”

“Well, now, do you know,” replied Mr. Chichester, “I sometimes feel quite solemnized, when I hear the sound of the organ rolling and echoing through the magnificent arches of the Cathedral; and the whole service is conducted in a very impressive manner, and one well calculated to influence the senses, and by that means, I suppose, to raise the heart to heaven.”

“More likely to chain it down to earth, Chichester,” said Mr. Evelyn; “I should think that amidst all that paraphernalia of robes and vestments, and all those bowings and genuflexions, people were very apt to lose sight of the God who is to be worshiped in Spirit and in Truth. I would not attend a Roman Catholic or a Unitarian church, for the same reason that I do not attend the theater—because, I believe that I should hear error taught there, and that it would be inconsistent both with my opinions and my feelings to be present.”

“Well, I think there are many excellent persons who are Roman Catholics,” said Mrs. Grant; “I have read, myself, of several whose lives were certainly most exemplary.”

“I grant that, Louisa,” said her brother; “I believe there have been hundreds of pious persons, who were Romanists; but it is the system of the church to which I object—not so much to particular individuals; though these have all held errors, more

or less, yet they may have had no opportunity of learning the truth and of obtaining a clearer light—and thus, doubtless, been accepted before God. Wherever an error exists, I would not think lightly of that error, but I would deal clemently and gently with the persons holding it. What is contrary to the Bible, we should withstand with our whole soul. Gavazzi's lectures, in this country, have done much to warn people against the encroachments of the Romish Church, and to rouse them to a sense of their danger in allowing the Romanists to gain a footing—for give them an inch and they will take an ell."

"O! Papa, I felt as if I could have listened to that noble Gavazzi for hours," said Beatrice; "his eloquence was so impassioned; his power of argument so clear and convincing, and his whole appearance so striking. O! it is something great, when a man gives up his position in that haughty church, to become an exile from his native land, for the sake of the glorious Truth, which alone can make poor Italy free or enable our own America to remain so!" and Beatrice's eyes kindled with enthusiasm as she spoke.

"Well, for my part," said Mrs. Grant, "I have heard a good many things said against Gavazzi; I must say, I am always cautious to admire: I have no doubt the man makes a great deal of money going about as he does."

“My dear Louisa,” said Mr. Evelyn, “why what an unreasonable woman you are! if you go on condemning everybody in that cynical way, there will soon be no one left to admire. Don’t you know, that whenever a man puts himself forward in the cause of truth, or, in fact, in any good cause whatsoever, a whole swarm of enemies are sure to rise up directly and begin to attack his motives and slander his conduct? but in the present case, I should think the Padre’s actions spoke for themselves; he has given up his home, and his country, and his friends, and is now subject to many persecutions and annoyances; look, for instance, at the attack made on him in Montreal; and as for money, why, I believe, he has several converted priests in London and elsewhere, depending on him for their support—and the loss of his means of subsistence, in his own country, does not go for nothing. I think, as long as it is in our power, we should endeavor to judge charitably of every man; and not, because one man comes boldly forward from the common herd, and dares to attack old prejudices and to speak energetically against crying errors, immediately begin calling out: O dear! he must be acting from some underhand motive—I don’t believe he means what he says.”

Mr. Chichester then rose to take leave, and when he had gone, Mr. Evelyn rang the bell to summon the servants to family prayers. These were con-

ducted, in his household, in a manner suitable to the family of a Christian. Mr. Evelyn first read a portion of Scripture, and explained, in simple and clear language, the meaning and practical signification of the passage. The whole family then joined in a hymn, which Beatrice led, accompanying the voices on the piano; and then, all kneeling, Mr. Evelyn offered an earnest prayer, expressive of their mutual wants and mutual causes of thankfulness to God.

CHAPTER III.

TO A CHILD.

"Nearer I seem to God, when looking on thee!
'Tis ages since He made His youngest star;
His hand was on thee as 'twere yesterday,
Thou later Revelation! Silver stream,
Breaking with laughter from the Lake Divine
Whence all things flow."—ALEXANDER SMITH.

THE next morning, when Beatrice awoke, almost her first thought was of little Blanche: poor child, she thought, how lonely and strange she must feel. I know she will be glad to see me again, and have some one to whom she can speak a word. I wish Hetty were here, she would be such a lively play-fellow for her—poor little motherless thing. With these thoughts in her mind, Beatrice rose and dressed quickly, and as soon as breakfast was concluded, she set out for Hawthorn street in the phaeton, accompanied by Socrates.

Little Blanche was watching for her from the window; and uttering an exclamation of delight, she rushed to the top of the stairs to meet Beatrice and

threw her arms round her neck, calling her, her chere, chere amie.

“An’ sure, an’ is it strangling the lady ye’d be,” said Bridget; “what for should ye be thinking I wouldn’t offer her a *cheer* meself. Won’t you plase to walk in, Miss—sure an’ how should a poor West Ingin like that, that can’t spake a word of English nor Irish either, know any manners?”

“The poor child was only showing her delight in seeing me, Biddy,” said Beatrice, smiling; “but I will come in while you put up what clothes she has.”

“Clothes, Miss!—an’ is it clothes intirely you’re maning? sorra an’ niver a blessed bit o’ clothes has she got, but them you see on her; it was a marcy she was saved from being dhrowned at all, at all! there wasn’t much time to think o’ her clothes.”

“Really, Biddy, I was very stupid not to think of that,” said Beatrice, “but she looks so nice and neat, that I was forgetting that what she has on must be all her wardrobe.”

“Ye see, Mistress,” said Biddy, “they’re good and fine clothes, but having but one set of ’em, I was obliged to wash ’em all out yisterday, and sorra niver a bit o’ my childers’ duds would she have on her while they vas a-drying, but she jist lay still in the bed yonder, looking at me working. Well! well! Miss, tho’ her tongue does seem a bit queer to me, my heart warms toward the poor child.”

"She cannot thank you now, Biddy, for herself, but I will thank you for her, and we will come, some day soon, and see you again; and I will try, before then, to teach Blanche enough of English to tell you how grateful she feels for all you have done for her."

"An' sure the poor darlint's welcome, intirely welcome; an' I wish it was more we could have done for her. Come now, shake hands with me before you go, little Missy, ye can that do at laste, I suppose," said Biddy.

"Serrez-lui la main," said Beatrice to Blanche, who did as she was told, and having received a kiss on the forehead from the good motherly Irishwoman, she gladly followed Beatrice down stairs to the phaeton, which soon deposited them at home.

"Wait a moment, Socrates," said Beatrice, as she jumped lightly out and helped Blanche to get down; "perhaps I shall want to go into the city to do some shopping, so you had better not take the harness off President, just yet."

"I'll wait here all day long, if Missy likes," was the old man's reply.

Mr. Evelyn met them in the hall. "Well, Bee! here you are; I thought it was about time you were coming; I wanted to speak with you about some arrangements concerning your little charge, before I go into the city, where I have to attend a meeting of the educational board to-day."

"Yes! Papa," said Beatrice, "let us go into the library, and there we can settle it all quietly."

"Papa!" said little Blanche, heaving a deep sigh, "ah! si c'etait mon Papa! mais il etait plus grand et il avait les cheveux plus noirs que ce monsieur là, et de plus il m'aurait baisé."

"No, I am not your Papa, poor little one," said Mr. Evelyn, as he seated himself on a library chair, and took Blanche on his knee, kissing her warmly as he did so, "but I will be your Papa, till I can send you back to your uncle in the West Indies, and I will take care of you, now your own Papa is dead."

"Ah! mon pauvre Papa," said Blanche, "je sais bien qu'il est mort, mais je ne puis pas le croire."

After some consultation, it was agreed that Beatrice should go into the city with her father to purchase some clothes for Blanche, and that on their return, Mr. Evelyn should write to Monsieur de Tremonille, letting him know of his brother's death and his niece's safety.

So it was arranged, but Blanche had to go with them, for she begged not to be left in that "grande maison" by herself; and she did not much fancy the appearance of Mrs. Grant, who came into the library while she was waiting for Beatrice, who had run out of the room to make up her list of commissions—and in truth, Mrs. Grant did not receive her very

cordially, for a cool nod and a survey from head to foot, were all Blanche received.

How a word of kindness wins a child's heart! and how quick children are to perceive the feelings of grown-up persons toward them; they seem to know instinctively where there is love and sunshine, and to cling to it and open their hearts to its warmth.

When they returned from the city, it was past three o'clock; Mr. Evelyn had been detained some time at the school-meeting.

Beatrice took Blanche through the house, that she might get to feel at home, and then led her into the conservatory to see her favorite flowers. Blanche said she wished Mademoiselle Evelyn could but see the "*fleurs magnifiques*" of the West Indies, and the cocoa-nut trees, and the pretty little humming-birds, and the beautiful bright butterflies. Sitting down on a rustic seat, Beatrice took Blanche on her knee, and suffered her to expatiate to her heart's content on all the tropical beauties she had seen, and on the manner of life at her Aunt's house, which, she said, was up on "*les hautes montagnes*," and that it was quite pleasantly cool there, and not burning hot, as it was on the plains. Beatrice began to lose herself in dreams of sunny lands and bright verdure, when she remembered that talking would not make Blanche's clothes; and taking her hand she went up stairs and sought Jane, her own

and Mrs. Grant's maid, with whose assistance she managed to cut out a frock and some of the most necessary articles of linen, and leaving Jane part of the work, she took the rest down to the drawing-room and set busily to work, ensconcing herself in a corner of the sofa, plying her needle diligently, while Blanche prattled gayly, jumping up every now and then as some fresh object of attention in the room struck her eye.

The next day was Saturday, and Hetty was fetched from school to spend the Sunday at home. Blanche was rather in awe of her at first, but a speedy friendship was soon formed between them, and indeed, there was something of a similarity between them—both were naturally impulsive and lively, and both full of buoyant spirits.

Blanche was not the kind of child to be in the way, at all; she seemed, instinctively, to know when she was not wanted, and would sit quietly by herself, with a book of pictures or an old doll of Hetty's, by the hour together: she had a great reverence and love for Beatrice; and never dreamed of disputing her word—indeed, her sweet and pliable disposition seemed to gain her general love, and even Mrs. Grant was a little thawed toward her. In a few days she began to speak a little broken English, which was a source of great amusement to them all; and Socrates frequently had to

dart from the dining-room, while waiting at dinner, to give vent to explosions of laughter—he said the little French lady was so “pecooliar in her discourse.”

Things rolled quietly on. The next Saturday was the commencement of Hetty’s vacation term, and gladly was the time looked forward to and welcomed. Many were now the delightful excursions and drives to the country, enjoyed by the girls; and the days slipped rapidly by, till the time came for an answer to be received from the West Indies.

One morning, Mr. Evelyn entered the breakfast-room, holding a letter in his hands, and with some concern depicted on his countenance. Seating himself at the table, he said, he had just heard from a gentleman, a merchant of St. Thomas, who said that Monsieur Eugene de Tremonville had died the preceding week of a rapid attack of fever, and that his widow was still so much overcome by his loss, that she had felt unable to write, herself, respecting his niece, but that she was very anxious to have the little girl sent to her as soon as possible, being resolved to adopt her as her own, and that, further, could Mr. Evelyn procure any person on whom he could place sufficient reliance to trust with the charge of the child, they should receive a handsome remuneration for their trouble.

Blanche’s face looked very grave, when it was explained to her that her uncle Eugene was dead

“Ah!” exclaimed she, “que ferai-je donc maintenant pour un Papa! and if I go chez ma tante, Mr. Evelyn will not be my Papa non-plus.”

“God will be your father and your friend, dear Blanche,” said Beatrice, “if you love Him and trust in Him.”

“Yes,” replied Blanche; “and I do love Him, for my own real Papa is gone to live with Him, and I know he loved Him for he used to talk to me about God and Heaven every day.”

“But really,” said Mr. Evelyn, “I do not see what is to be done with the poor child. How can I, possibly, find anybody going from New York to St. Thomas, who would be willing, even for money, to take charge of a little girl all that distance; and, beside, I should not like to trust any one with her, but an old friend of my own, or unless there were a lady going—and such an opportunity might not occur for a year or more.”

“Well, Papa, we will take care of her till such a time comes,” said Hetty; “I want to teach Blanche to speak English well, before she goes.”

“Well, my dear,” said Mr. Evelyn, “I will consider the subject; I feel that her widowed aunt will want her, and that it would be a great satisfaction to me to know that she was safe among her friends. Inclosed in the letter,” continued Mr. Evelyn, “came a remittance of money, to a considerable

amount, from Madame de Tremonille, and a message from her, begging me to procure with it such things as were necessary for her niece, both during her sojourn in America and also for the voyage; and expressing a wish, at the same time, that part of it might be laid out in purchasing some useful present for the family of the poor Irish sailor, whom I mentioned, when I wrote, as having been so instrumental in saving her life at the time of the shipwreck. I know Blanche will be glad to take a present to poor Pat Ryan, who was so good to her—will she not?" he said, as he stroked her soft, dark curls in passing across the room to the library.

"Yes sir," said Blanche, "I should be very glad to make him and his little children *un peu* comfortable."

"Well then, girls, settle what the present is to be, among yourselves; and let me know the result."

"Come Blanche," said Hetty, as her father left the room "you and I and Beatrice will go and hold a grand consultation; come, let us all go into the conservatory—it will be cozy there."

Many were the things suggested and then relinquished as unfeasible, by each of the trio; Blanche's selections, by reason of her youth and inexperience, being, of course, the wildest and most unsuitable. It was finally settled, however, that Pat should have a silver watch and a new pea-jacket, both of which

would be useful to him at sea; that Biddy should rejoice in the possession of a brown stuff gown and a bright plaid shawl with a neat straw bonnet, and that each of the little ones should have a new suit of clothes, many of the articles of which could be bought ready-made, such as jackets, caps, shoes, socks, etc. The whole could be purchased, Beatrice said, for fifty dollars; and this was voted not too much, and the committee accordingly adjourned to Papa, who highly approved of their choice, but, he added, that as he had set aside a larger sum than fifty dollars for the family, he should give the rest in money to Biddy, to help her to support her little ones during Pat's absence at sea.

Mr. Evelyn then volunteered to go into the city with them, and purchase the articles, as some of them, such as the pea-jacket and watch, would require his judgment; the phaeton would just hold four, too, so it was agreed they should all go.

"Perhaps, Aunt Louisa might want to go into the city to-day," said Beatrice; "I will just run and ask her—I should not like us all to go, without saying anything to her about it."

But it was found, that Aunt Louisa did not want to go, being very busy up-stairs about some elaborate piece of transferring; and the rest of the party were soon ready to start.

The different articles were quite satisfactorily bought, and the money was amply sufficient—but as they could not quite guess at the size of the clothes for the two largest boys, they arranged to change them if they did not fit. As the parcels were large, it was agreed that they should drive back by Hawthorn street, and so all have the pleasure of seeing the presents given. Poor Biddy was very much astonished, when, after having tied President to a post on the side-walk, Mr. Evelyn, and his daughters, and Blanche, all went up the narrow staircase, each bearing a large bundle. She had her youngest child in her arms, a little fair-haired girl of some sixteen months old, who nestled her head in her mother's breast at the sight of so many strangers.

“Well, Biddy, where's Pat to-day?” said Mr. Evelyn, as she met them on the top of the stairs.

“Faith, sir, an' its jist in the room he is, taking his bit o' dinner; and sorra I be to say, that his ship is to sail ag'in for them furrin' parts in ten days—short time enough, sir, the blessed darlint that he is,” said she, wiping her eyes; “but plase walk in, sir.”

“Well, Biddy,” returned Mr. Evelyn, “dry your eyes, and look what a kind French lady, little Blanche's aunt, has sent Pat, to thank him for

taking such care of her niece, after her poor father's death."

Pat's parcel was then unrolled, and unbounded was the glee of the family at its contents; the watch seemed to give Pat immense satisfaction; he said it made him feel quite grand, and that it would be so useful to him, when his ship should be in port any time, and he should get leave to go on shore for a few hours, that he might know when to return to the vessel again, and "many, many times beside that, yer honor," he continued; "and the jacket, too, it's a raal beauty! not but what the young lady was vastly welcome to what little I could do to help her—poor thing, she was bad enough off as it was."

"Pat, I can say thank you, now," said little Blanche, advancing timidly; "thank you for all de great kindness you and Biddy have showed to me."

She could not trust her English acquirements farther. But Biddy was delighted, and kissing her fondly, she told her she was "a raal clever child, and would soon talk like any dacent crathur."

Beatrice next produced the gown and shawl for Biddy, while Blanche held up the bonnet. There were fresh exclamations of delight and rapture as Bridget held up a width of the gown before her, and put on the shawl and bonnet, (which was neatly trimmed with a green ribbon).

"Sure, an' ould girl, I'll always think of ye, just as you look this blessed minnit, when I'm far away upon the broad says," said Pat, looking fondly at his wife.

A tear stood in Biddy's eye—half of sorrow and half of joy. Her heart was too full to speak, so she only smiled a look of affection and love at her husband.

The little ones had, ere this, received their share from Hetty and Beatrice, and were all busily engaged trying on the various articles, most of which fitted admirably, and the rest, were to go with their mother, next morning, to be changed. Mr. Evelyn then slipped a purse, containing fifty dollars, into Biddy's hand; and willing to leave the family to the enjoyment of their treasures, the party bade them all farewell, and a few minutes brought them to their own door.

The time of Hetty's vacation drew to a close, and many were the lamentations uttered on her departure. It now, of course, became a favorite recreation, with Beatrice and Blanche, to drive over to see Hetty; and gladly did the latter welcome the sight of President drawing the phaeton up the avenue leading to the school.

Blanche's education was not neglected by Beatrice, and she began to speak English very tolerably indeed, and in her visits to the houses of the poor, and

the school, and in as near an approach to what may be called country-rambles, as they could find in the outskirts of a city, Beatrice found her a pleasant and useful little companion. When Mrs. Grant chose to accompany them, Blanche readily understood that she was to chatter less than usual ; and she trotted along, very demurely, by Beatrice's side.

Thus the days passed by, till the autumn-time crept upon them. It was the beginning of October ; the trees had assumed those glorious fall-tints, for which the American forests are so justly remarkable : stores of fruits, for winter hoarding, apples, pears and nuts of all kinds, arrived in large quantities from a small farm which Mr. Evelyn owned in the country, and carefully putting these away, sorting and arranging them, furnished many hours' employment for Beatrice and Blanche. There were now pleasant, cozy evenings passed by the side of bright fires ; Beatrice read aloud, a great deal, to Mr. Evelyn, while Mrs. Grant sat and knitted, and Blanche made clothes for her doll or drew on her transparent slate. Still no escort had been found for the latter, though Mr. Evelyn had made persevering inquiries ; and he had been the more incited to do this, as two more letters had been received from Madame de Tremonille, begging him to send little Blanche home to her, as soon as possible.

One evening found them all thus assembled in the drawing-room ; the tea-tray had just been brought in, and the urn was steaming and hissing on the table.

“ Papa,” said Beatrice, “ I often feel, when things are so pleasant around me, almost too great a sense of satisfaction and gratification. I feel as if they could not pass away from me ; I do so like to go on in just a quiet way, with no particular event happening. Just a quiet round of usefulness, with the society of those I love, is all I seem to care for.”

“ Well, my child,” returned her father, “ I think we cannot be too sensible of God’s many mercies, nor enjoy them too thoroughly and gratefully, but we must always remember that we hold these things by an uncertain tenure ; we must be content to enjoy them, and yet content to give them up if it be His will ; we should never say, as Job records of himself, ‘ I will die in my nest ;’ we must not, as it were, cling to a future of our own imagining, and say, this one thing will I have, and nothing else. It is not wrong to be happy when the Lord gives us, as it were, a breathing-time in our journey—but we must be able to say with Paul, ‘ none of these things move me ; neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy.’ When your dear mother was alive, my Bee, I used to feel sometimes almost too happy in her society—she was

such a gentle, loving friend and companion to me, and her habits and tastes were so in accordance with my own, that I never used to picture anything else to my mind but a continuance of such bliss, and a quiet journey together, hand in hand, down the hill of life. Now the Lord has taken her to Himself long ago, and yet I am not unhappy—I seem to have a brighter and pleasanter prospect awaiting me on the other side of the dark river, now that she has passed over before me; and when I look on this side, I see many blessings to rejoice in—and you and my gladsome Hetty are left to cheer my old age. You, especially, bring your dear mother to my remembrance; my Bee, you are the most like her, both in appearance and manners.”

Beatrice made no reply, but gently kissed her father's forehead, for she felt the subject was too sacred to admit of much conversation. When she went up-stairs to bed that night, Beatrice took from her dressing-case a small miniature portrait of her mother, which her father had given her some years before, and as she gazed on the soft and gentle lineaments, she felt what a loss such a wife must have been to him, and she inwardly resolved to devote herself more than ever to promote his comfort and happiness; and I am sure it requires no self-denial to do this, thought she, as she gazed round her comfortable room. Elegant prints adorned the neatly-

papered walls; a bright and cheerful chintz covered the furniture; in one corner hung the cage of her favorite canaries, and in the other was a well-supplied book-case, while two or three pretty marble statuettes stood on the mantle-piece. Dear Papa leaves me nothing to wish for, said Beatrice to herself, and he is so kind a friend and counselor, how can I do otherwise than love him? She walked to the window, and drawing aside the curtain, gazed at the moon and stars, which were shining in unclouded brilliancy. O! how many events these pure stars look down on! thought she; it fills my heart with an indefinable feeling of melancholy, admiration and humility. How very, very little do the affairs of one individual of this earth seem when gazing on that immensity of space! And yet our Heavenly Father, who created all, cares for every one of his children; not a hair of their heads falls to the ground without Him. O! that I might be enabled to do some work for Him, in my time on earth! Lord! help me to be patient and wait! I have sometimes felt as if it were impossible that I should be remembered by God, after my body shall have passed into dust; I, a poor, unknown individual, but one among the millions now inhabiting the earth, and, what is more, among the millions upon millions who have passed into eternity. But I do know and feel that it was only the weakness of my faith which ever

gave me these feelings; that *all* things are possible with God, and that his elect will surely be remembered by Him “in the day when He maketh up his jewels.” Lord, help me ever, in this life, to have such an assurance of my being accepted in Jesus, that my faith may be always clear and bright.

Turning from the window, Beatrice sat down at her little reading-table and opened a manuscript book, in which she occasionally noted down her thoughts and feelings, or any particular passage which might strike her when reading. She now turned over its pages till she came upon some lines she had written some time before, when under the influence of some such thoughts as those we have noticed above:

“There is a time our soul is fraught
With the immensity of thought,
And hov’ring on Time’s shelving shore,
Would fain th’ invisible explore—
But, dazzled with th’ excess of light,
Must shade itself in th’ infinite.
In such an hour we frame our way,
Far from the turmoil of the gay,
Beneath a wood, where stately trees
Bend o’er still waters in the breeze—
Like guardian shades, the flowers above,
Which odors breathe in grateful love.
There, lying on a mossy bed,
We rest our world-worn, aching head,
Gazing on fretted roof, bathed through
With rays from Heaven’s own boundless blue.

Fain would we hush the thoughts that sweep,
Across the soul's storm-ruffled deep;
The dread immensity of calm,
Fills our weak hearts with vain alarm.
'Tis I! 'tis I, it ever must be I,
On through the mazes of eternity!
I am but one, from all that throng,
That hurrying press the streets along:
Can I, a speck, forever stay,
Cared for and known, nor pass away
To that dim land, where, all forgot,
They'd say he was, but he is not?
O! false, weak heart, the very flowers,
The stream, the trees, the leafy bowers,
In gladsome, all-melodious voice,
Seem lovingly to say, rejoice
In Him who gave us endless days,
That we might lose ourselves in praise;
In Him alone our life can be
A bliss through all eternity;
When lost in Him we ever move,
Rejoicing in His boundless love."

Beatrice sank into a kind of reverie, and sat leaning her head on her hand, till she was roused by hearing the clock of a neighboring church toll the hour of eleven. She stole quietly into the little dressing-room adjoining, where, on a low cot-bed, Blanche lay in the deep, quiet sleep of childhood. Giving one affectionate glance at the little sleeper, Beatrice returned, leaving the door of communication between the rooms open, as was her custom, in case Blanche should awake in the night. Then

extinguishing her candle, she softly drew aside the window curtain and allowed the calm moonlight to stream into the room before she knelt down to pour forth her soul in prayer to her Heavenly Father. She felt, what I dare say many of my readers may have experienced, that there is something in the sweet moonlight which enables one, if I may say so, the more easily to bring the thoughts to hold communion with God. Perhaps it is that the pure calmness of the light seems to hush and tranquilize the rebellious senses, and enable one the better to curb the wanderings of the thoughts. Perhaps it is because sin, and corruption, and decay seem less palpably present with us, and that therefore the soul that clings to the Lord, who is called "the Author of light," in such an hour, appears to obtain a clearer and more precious view of His beauty and fullness.

There is a mysterious feeling of stillness and quietness through a house, when every one has retired to bed. How every sound strikes on the ear! There is the clock ticking in the hall; how loud it sounds! There is a cricket chirping in the kitchen; how distinctly it is heard up-stairs! Even the very movements of our own body seem almost to startle us—to be doubly conscious.

Everything had long been silent in her father's house, when Beatrice crept into bed that night. After two or three hours of quiet slumber, she

dreamt that she was in the cabin of a ship at sea, and that it was so small and confined that she could not breathe—it seemed as if the close air was stifling her, and starting uneasily in her sleep, she awoke slowly to the consciousness that her room was filled with smoke. Yes, thick volumes of smoke filled both that room and the adjoining one, and, almost suffocating, Beatrice jumped up, and hastily throwing a dressing-gown around her, she rushed into the dressing-room and waking Blanche, she enveloped her in a shawl, and ran quickly along the corridor to her father's room. Knocking quickly and loudly at the door, she called: "Papa! Papa! dear Papa! the house is on fire! the house is on fire, Papa! oh, do come!" Mr. Evelyn was quickly aroused, and commanding his daughter and little Blanche to remain perfectly quiet in his room, for a few moments, he ran to arouse his sister and the servants. Blanche clung tremblingly to Beatrice, scarcely yet awake, and hardly knowing what to fear. In a very short time footsteps were heard coming along the passage, and Mr. Evelyn entered, followed by Jane, who looked very pale, and had a bundle of clothes under her arm.

"Come, my darling, here are some wraps, such as we have been able to procure in the hurry," said Mr. Evelyn to Beatrice; "make haste and put them round Blanche and yourself, and then follow me

down the back-stairs. The house is indeed on fire, my child—the flames are raging furiously in the front; I scarcely think we shall save anything, but I must first see you and your aunt safe before I look to anything else. Socrates is gone to give the alarm and get the fire-engines.”

Beatrice and Blanche were ready in a moment, with Jane’s nimble assistance, and just then Mrs. Grant joined them, looking very much frightened. Bidding them all follow him quickly, Mr. Evelyn led them all out of the house, and hastily passed up the street, supporting Mrs. Grant, while Beatrice and Blanche, with the two female servants, followed behind. The glare already illuminated the sky, and the fire-bells were tolling in all parts of the city. O! how strangely and unexpectedly do events happen! thought Beatrice—but she only pressed Blanche’s hand, and the latter was too much lost in wonder and excitement to talk.

At about two squares from their burning house Mr. Evelyn stopped, and hastily pulled the door-bell of a large red brick dwelling, where their minister, Mr. Grey, resided. After the lapse of a minute, an upper window was opened, and a voice inquired, “Who is there?”

“A friend in distress, Mr. Grey,” said Mr. Evelyn; “but do pray come down and let us in, and I will tell you all about it.”

The window was quickly shut, and in a few moments the minister, himself, was heard unbolting and unbarring the street-door.

A few words from Mr. Evelyn sufficed to explain the nature of things.

“Come into the drawing-room,” said Mr. Grey, “and establish yourselves as you best may: my wife and Walter will be down directly to see if they can render you any assistance, and I will call up the servant-girl to kindle a fire immediately”—and the good man bustled about, and looked so sympathizing, that our poor wanderers felt quite comforted.

“Well then, sir, I shall leave them all under your protection,” said Mr. Evelyn; “I must go back to try and save what things I can. The back of the house was still untouched, when we left.”

Mr. Grey then lit a candle on the mantle-piece, and hurried out of the room to make further preparations for their comfort, and almost directly his good, motherly wife, appeared. Affectionately kissing Beatrice, she expressed her warm sympathy with them in their trouble, saying, at the same time, that she was very glad they had come to her, and she would make them all as comfortable as she possibly could. The servant-girl lit a cheerful fire in the grate, and took possession of Mr. Evelyn’s servants, and carried them off to the kitchen regions as her guests.

"I hear Walter coming down the stairs, dear Beatrice," said Mrs. Grey, "but you need not mind him; I assure you you look quite presentable in that hood and cloak. He would not like to be away from the fire, in case he could be of any use: beside, you and he are old friends, you know."

Beatrice colored slightly as Walter Grey came into the room; and hastily shaking hands with her, said, there was no time for ceremony then, but that he had just come in to ask her if there were any things she was particularly anxious to save from the fire, in case it should be in his power to get at them.

Beatrice hurriedly named a few articles, among which was her dressing-case containing her mother's picture.

"Thank you! thank you!" she continued, as he turned to leave the room; "but pray do not expose yourself to any danger on my account; and oh! Mr. Grey, do pray look after my dear father, and see that he is careful of himself."

"Never fear, never fear," said the young man, and rushing up the street, he was out of sight in a moment.

The time seemed so dull and so fraught with anxiety while waiting at Mrs. Grey's! She was very kind to be sure, but it felt so strange to Beatrice to be sitting there at two o'clock in the morning, and to think of what was going on at her own beloved

home. Little Blanche soon went to sleep on the sofa, comfortably wrapped up in a large shawl, and a cup of hot tea was brought in for Mrs. Grant and Beatrice. Twice they all went to the top of the house to see how the fire was gaining ground. Alas ! the prospect was not very satisfactory. There seemed to be but little left of their own dwelling but the bare walls, at the last visit ; and two of the adjoining houses had caught fire, and the people in them were to be seen hurriedly moving their furniture and running about in great confusion, while the roofs of the neighboring houses were covered with people—some of whom were mere lookers-on, while others were engaged in covering any wood-work which was exposed, with wet carpets and blankets, or in extinguishing any large sparks which might have fallen near them. Two or three times old Mr. Grey came down to report progress to them. He said that a great number of their things had been saved and had been carried, as the night was fine, to an adjoining lot, with Socrates and another man left to guard them ; that Mr. Evelyn's house, being soon past recovery, he and his own son, Walter, were busy helping those whose dwellings had caught fire the latest—and of these there were now several—and before four o'clock in the morning, nearly half a square had been burnt.

A little after that hour the gentlemen came home.

Beatrice ran to the door to meet her father, and found him in a miserable plight, drenched to the skin with water from the hose of the engines, and shivering from head to foot. She was almost too thankful to see him again, to notice this at first, but Mr. Grey said: "Come now, Miss Beatrice, your Papa is safe, thank God, but he must go to bed directly and get a good hot bath, or he will be ill, and that will be worse than the fire."

Beatrice looked up anxiously in her father's face, but he assured her that it was nothing—that he had certainly got a thorough wetting, and that standing in the cool night air had made him feel chilly, but that he hoped to be quite right again soon.

The party all needed rest certainly, so a mattress was spread on the drawing-room floor for Mrs. Grant and Beatrice, and a bed-room was quickly got ready for Mr. Evelyn, and ere very long silence reigned through the house.

But Beatrice could only toss restlessly over, and think of the events of the night with mingled thankfulness and pain — thankfulness for their preservation, and pain when she thought that the home in which she had spent so many, many happy hours existed no longer. Morning dawned ere she could compose her mind to anything like a sufficiently tranquil state, even for a troubled sleep, and when she again awoke the sun shone brightly through the

chinks of the closed shutters. The first sight of where she was, shot a pang of regretful remembrance through her heart as the circumstances which brought her there forced themselves upon her recollection. She heard kind Mrs. Grey running nimbly about the house, apparently engaged, with the assistance of the servant, in preparing breakfast for her large party of unexpected guests; and presently came a gentle tap at the door, and her good-natured face peeped in, and seeing Beatrice was awake, she softly crept into the room, and kissing her, told her that Socrates had arrived with as many of their clothes as could be saved in the hurry and confusion. These, she said, were more than might have been expected, as the sheets and quilts had been hastily torn off the beds and filled with the contents of drawers and closets and then thrown out in large bundles to the standers below.

“Mr. Grey is dressed and gone into Mr. Evelyn’s room, to see how he is this morning: so you must all of you come quickly up-stairs to my dressing-room and get ready for breakfast, for Ann will not like it if we let her muffins and coffee get cold.”

Mrs. Grant and Blanche were now awake, and following Mrs. Grey up-stairs, the whole party were soon comfortably dressed — any little deficiency in their wardrobe, or in the appurtenances of the toilet, being supplied by her with ready good-nature.

Beatrice's anxious thoughts were with her father, for she feared the effects of the past night's exposure on his constitution, which was naturally none of the strongest. Mr. Grey, however, was still with him in his room, so she did not like to go herself, at present, to ask how he felt. Still she was very uneasy, and the uneasiness was increased, when a few moments afterward she heard Mr. Grey's voice at the top of the stairs softly calling Socrates, who was at that moment passing through the hall, with a tray of breakfast-things in his hands.

"Me coming directly, Massa Grey," was the reply; and after a few whispered words from Mr. Grey, Socrates went quickly out of the hall-door.

Hastily summoning her resolution, Beatrice ran out and caught Mr. Grey before he reached her father's room.

"O! Mr. Grey, do pray tell me is there anything the matter with dear Papa?" inquired she, breathlessly; "is he very ill? oh! let me see him at once"—and Beatrice looked up beseechingly in Mr. Grey's face.

"My dear young lady, compose yourself," said the good minister, "I cannot conceal from you that your father appears to have taken a very severe cold, and that at the present moment he has so much fever about him, that I thought it right to send for Dr. Morton.

“But come in, my dear, and see him for yourself—he will be comforted by seeing you.”

Without speaking, Beatrice quickly but softly opened the door, and advancing to the bed, threw her arms round her father's neck, and begged him, with tears in her eyes, to tell her if he really felt so very ill.

“Do not be alarmed, my precious one,” replied Mr. Evelyn; “I believe I have caught a severer cold than I anticipated, but I feel thankful to be in the hands of such kind friends, and above all to see you safe and well, and have you with me to nurse me. Dr. Morton will be here presently, and I dare say I shall soon be well again. But remember, my Bee, we are in the Lord's hands, let him do with me what seemeth Him good.”

“O! Papa, how burning hot your cheeks and hands are,” said Beatrice, anxiously; “is there nothing I can do for you?”

“I think I should like a cup of tea, dear child,” said her father, “if you would fetch it for me.”

Beatrice ran down stairs, and having given her father the tea, she sat down by the window to await the doctor's coming. It was not long before his buggy drove up to the door, and he came up to Mr. Evelyn's room, accompanied by Mr. Grey. Beatrice left them both with her father, and went down to the room where the rest of the family were assembled

at breakfast. Blanche jumped up to meet her with a glad smile of welcome on her face, and as Beatrice took her seat at the table, Mrs. Grant inquired after her brother's health, saying, she supposed, he had only taken a slight cold.

"Indeed, Aunt," said Beatrice, "it seems more, I am afraid, than a slight cold. He looks so feverish I cannot help feeling very uneasy, but Dr. Morton is with him now."

"Well, I will go up and see him when the doctor comes down," said her aunt.

Beatrice then turned to Walter, and thanked him warmly for his exertions in their behalf during the previous night.

"I only wish I could have done more," replied Walter; but I am glad to say I secured your dressing-case, Miss Evelyn. See, there it stands," he continued, pointing to a small table near the window; "and there are a few books beside, which, I thought, you might value, your large Bible among others."

"Oh, my dear old Bible," said Beatrice; "I should indeed have been sorry to lose that—it was dear Mamma's gift to me before she died, when I was quite a little girl. It was so thoughtful of you to bring it, Mr. Grey, I am so very, very much obliged to you."

Walter colored with pleasure, he was only too glad to have been able to please Beatrice Evelyn.

They had known each other from childhood, though frequently, of late, months had elapsed without any communication between them, as Walter had been at college, studying for a physician. Nothing had ever, as yet, passed between them beyond the interchange of friendly feelings and sentiments, and yet there had been on both sides an almost unacknowledged admiration of each other's character. Walter had long seen what a gentle, loving, and yet noble disposition Beatrice possessed, and had often thought to himself, what a wife she would make to any one worthy of her; but his own worldly prospects were as yet, he thought, too unsettled to admit of his thinking of himself in the light of her lover. Still, he allowed himself to cherish some ray of hope for the future, when he saw that Beatrice's affections appeared still to be unengaged. During the time of Mr. Chichester's frequent visits to her father's house, Walter had held still more aloof, but he had lately received a hint from his mother that Mrs. Grant had told her, in confidence, that there was no affection existing toward Mr. Chichester, on Beatrice's part, and he therefore felt again encouraged to hope for the best. Walter was not one of those miserably weak-minded young men, who can be engaged to different girls several times in the course of their bachelor lives, and have these engagements broken off without any effect on their spirits; the

mere passing admiration having certainly taken no hold on their hearts — if they have such things as hearts at all. A man who can love so lightly and so frequently, never loves strongly and devotedly — and Walter was none of these. He bestowed his affection and admiration carefully, and it was because he placed before his mind such a high standard of excellence that few characters could win his love. It was not that he was cold or unimpassioned. No! he had a depth of earnest love in his heart, that triflers, who have been corrupted by the world and its ways, can never dream of; but he formed to himself an ideal image of the woman he could thoroughly love, and till this ideal should be embodied, his heart could not be given. Walter was a *Christian* young man, in the true sense of that word. He was not one of those who think that youth is the time to give free vent to every sinful passion, and to plunge into every excess of pleasure; that young men must be young men, and “sow their wild oats.” Hollow-hearted falsehood and specious lies! He knew that God formed no man under the *necessity* of sinning; and his soul recoiled from participating in the sinful (so-called) pleasures which led astray so many of his fellow-students at the college. He knew and felt that a sin, though it may be forgiven by God, can never, in one sense, be forgotten; and that the mind that has been vitiated and polluted

can never shake itself as clean and clear again, in this life, as though it had never been defiled. If Walter ever got laughed at by his companions, and called a “miff,” and a “slow fellow,” for not joining a drinking or card party, he was too much of a true hero to let idle jeers influence his conduct; and he was so lively and good-humored, and so generous and kind in his disposition, that even the worst of them were generally compelled, before long, to acknowledge that “Walter Grey was not such a bad fellow, after all.”

Perhaps Walter was already aware that Beatrice approached more nearly to his ideal, than any one else he knew; and such a character as his was just calculated to win her esteem and admiration, but he had not yet sought her as a lover, and she thought of him only as a friend.

Perhaps it may appear strange that Walter should not have made choice of his father's profession—that of a minister; but to say the truth, he wished to bind himself to no party, which he thought would be involved by becoming a minister among any particular denomination. He thought that there were some errors existing among all parties and sects, and whether a man were an Episcopalian, a Baptist, a Methodist, or a Presbyterian, it mattered not, Walter thought, so long as he was a Bible Christian—one who knew the Saviour, and was united to him

in the common brotherhood of Christian fellowship. After maturely considering these subjects, young Grey decided on studying physic, as being a useful and philanthropic occupation, and also as affording him abundant opportunities, while attending the bedside of the sick and dying, to administer likewise to their spiritual necessities and to point the heart, trembling and impressible from sickness, to the Redeemer of mankind and the Father of mercy. He had not, as yet, quite finished his academical career, but when he should have completed it, he hoped to obtain a sphere of usefulness in a small village, about twenty miles from the city of Hartford, where some friends of his mother resided, and which had lately been pointed out to him as greatly in want of efficient medical assistance, and as, therefore, presenting a promising opening for a beginner.

But we have made a long digression for the purpose of introducing our friend Walter to our readers, and we must not forget that we left Beatrice Evelyn anxiously awaiting the entrance of the doctor to report upon the state of her father's health.

When he did come, the account was unsatisfactory. The symptoms were bad, and the doctor said he should call again at noon. Ere that hour, however, Mr. Evelyn was delirious with fever, and kept calling for Beatrice to come to him, though she was

at that time sitting by him, mute with grief. Mrs. Grant, too, stood at the foot of the bed, willing indeed, but unable to render any assistance.

After some time passed in silence, broken only by the voice of the sufferer, Beatrice sank down on her knees in prayer by the bedside, and then rising and forcing herself to be calm, she said:

“Aunt, something must be done; do pray let us rouse ourselves and try and act, and not give way under this affliction, which our Heavenly Father has seen fit to send us. It is quite impossible that we can allow Mrs. Grey to be burdened any longer with so many additional inmates. There are the two servant-girls and Socrates in the kitchen, and then ourselves and little Blanche, beside dear Papa. It must not be permitted for a single night. She is so kind that I know she will never say a word till we mention it; do, Aunt, try and propose some plan.”

“Really, Beatrice, I feel quite incapable of thinking,” replied Mrs. Grant, in an agitated tone, “my nerves are in such a distressing state from the fire last night, and now seeing my dear brother lying there so ill. Propose a plan yourself, dear child; you have less sensitiveness than I.”

Beatrice’s lip quivered with emotion, as she thought how little her Aunt understood her, but after pausing a moment or so she said, calmly: “I think, Aunt, you should immediately take a small

furnished house as near this as possible, and go there yourself, with Blanche and the servants. Of course moving dear Papa is quite out of the question, so I will remain here and nurse him, for I could not possibly leave his side now, and you will come and see him as often as you can."

Mrs. Grant acquiesced in this arrangement, and it was further decided that Hetty should be sent for from school, as she would be wanted in a thousand ways, and among others to take charge of Blanche, who, Beatrice knew, would be quite alarmed at the thought of being left alone with Mrs. Grant.

"If you will remain here with poor Papa, Aunt," said Beatrice, "I will go down stairs and tell Mrs. Grey of our plan."

As Beatrice had conjectured, Mrs. Grey at first remonstrated against the separation of the party, at least for the present, but she was finally prevailed on to consent, and Walter, who just then came into the room, volunteered to go in search of suitable lodgings.

While he was gone, Dr. Morton arrived, and Beatrice's fears were somewhat allayed by his pronouncing her father to be in no immediate danger.

After about an hour Walter Grey came back, having been successful in his search for a house, and before dusk, Mrs. Grant and the rest of the

party were safely installed there, with such effects as had been preserved from the fire.

Beatrice was sitting quietly by her father's bedside, in the afternoon, when Walter softly rapped at the room-door. She went to open it. "Miss Evelyn," said he, "President and the phaeton were sent up to a livery stable, about a square from here, last night, as soon as they could be rescued from the stable; do you not think it would be a good plan if I were to go in the phaeton and fetch your sister Hetty?—I am sure she will be gladly welcomed in Curzon street by one party at least, for I left little Blanche looking very tearful at being separated from you."

"Thank you, Mr. Grey, you are only too kind," said Beatrice, "I should indeed feel very grateful if you would go for dear Hetty; and pray break to her all that has happened as gently as possible. Poor child! she will be so grieved. And tell her, Mr. Grey, to bring a good supply of clothes with her; it does not seem likely that she will be able to go back to school again at present. But stay: perhaps I had better write her a note."

"I am sure that is not necessary," said Walter; "I feel that I can tell her all you wish; and if I go directly I shall be back before dark."

"This house will be on your way from the school to Curzon street," said Beatrice; "stop on your

return, please, and let me say a few words to dear Hetty."

"Anything and everything you wish," replied Walter, "I only wish there were something else you could tell me to do for you. God bless you, dear Miss Evelyn;" and taking her hand, he pressed it respectfully to his lips, and without venturing another look, he turned and ran down stairs, and Beatrice heard him shut the hall-door almost immediately afterward.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Oh ! weary hearts ! oh, slumbering eyes !
Oh ! drooping souls, whose destinies
Are fraught with care and pain,
Ye shall be lov'd again.”—LONGFELLOW.

“ There is a fragrant blossom, that maketh glad the garden of the heart. * * *

“ Memory and absence cherish it, as the balmy breathings of the South.

“ Its sun is the brightness of affection and it bloometh in the borders of Hope.”—TUPPER'S “ PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.”

THE days passed wearily and heavily along, and still there was but little amendment in Mr. Evelyn's health. On the third day of his illness, however, the fever comparatively left him and he again knew those around him ; but he was in a pitiable state of weakness, and was suffering great pain in his chest and throat. Beatrice's spirits drooped, and yet she showed it as little as possible before the kind friends by whom she was surrounded. Mr. and Mrs. Grey were untiringly attentive and thoughtful, and whenever Walter had an opportunity, he was on the alert to do anything that might promote her comfort ; two nights he sat up with Mr. Evelyn, his mother

insisting upon Beatrice's going regularly to bed, assuring her that she would make herself seriously ill if she did not do so. Mrs. Grant and Hetty came every day to see them; they seemed to be going on tolerably comfortably in the new house. They had dismissed one of the servant-girls — Jane and Socrates being sufficient to attend on so small a party.

At the end of ten days, Dr. Morton pronounced Mr. Evelyn decidedly better, and in a short time he was able to sit up; still a hard, hacking cough hung about him, and the doctor said it would never do for him to spend the winter in New York, but that he must go to a warmer climate, when he should be strong enough to bear the journey. The first evening that her father was well enough to come down stairs and sit in an easy-chair by the drawing-room fire, was a happy one for Beatrice. She drew a low ottoman and sat down at his feet—Mr. Grey read aloud to them while his wife sat and worked, and Walter sat at a small table near the window, copying some anatomical drawings.

When Mr. Grey had finished reading, Mr. Evelyn said that an idea had crossed his mind that morning which he wished to subject to the vote of his assembled friends.

“You know,” he continued, “that the little French girl, Blanche de Tremonille is only awaiting an escort to be sent home to her aunt at St. Thomas.

Now, could not my sojourn in a warm climate be passed there, and thus both purposes be answered? I think I should enjoy the trip, and I never suffer much from sea-sickness."

"Well! papa," said Beatrice, "I have only one stipulation to make, and that is, that I go with you; of course, you know I must go, to take care both of you and Blanche."

"Well! my bonny Bee, but what do our friends think of the place?"

"I think, my dear sir," said Mr. Grey, "that if you must leave us, the plan is an excellent one. I have heard that the climate in the high lands of the island is not disagreeably hot, and please God, we shall hope to see you among us all in the spring, looking yourself again."

A shade of disappointment passed over Walter's face at the idea of Beatrice's departure; he felt as if he were now going to lose her altogether, and during the next few minutes of conversation among the rest of the party, his thoughts were busily engaged in trying to discover a suitable way of saying something to Beatrice on the subject. Well, it was finally arranged, that they should sail in one week's time, should Mr. Evelyn's strength permit it — that Mrs. Grant should keep house with Hetty till their return, the latter being taken away from school, at least for the present. Hetty was not very well

pleased when she was told, next day, of this arrangement, but Mrs. Grey comforted her by telling her that she must come and see her every day, and that she would often take her nice walks to see her poor people, etc., and Hetty declared she should write an immensely long letter to Beatrice every week, and tell her all her thoughts and doings.

Two comfortable cabins, adjoining each other, were taken for the party, in a pretty little brigantine, bound for St. Thomas, with a cargo of shingles, which was to sail in nine days. One of these cabins contained two berths, which were for Beatrice and little Blanche, and it was arranged that Beatrice should go down, the following day, with Mrs. Grey and Walter to inspect their accommodation. Mr. Grey also volunteered to be of the party, so about ten o'clock in the morning they all set off. A good part of the way lay through crowded wharves, and very bustling streets, so that, although Walter was walking with Beatrice, he could find but little opportunity of speaking to her.

A boat came off to take them all on board, and the day was so fine and clear that they remained there some time, inspecting the ship, which was found to be in all respects what could be wished, and they much enjoyed the delightful prospect which lay before them. The harbor was studded with ships of all nations, and a perfect forest of

masts lay close to the shore. Walter was leaning over the side of the vessel with Beatrice, occasionally addressing a few words of conversation to her. Anxious thoughts of "now or never" filled his breast; he wanted to say something, and yet he felt as though he were hardly confident enough respecting her feelings toward him to say too much. He raised himself and walked slowly two or three times up and down the deck, and then again approaching Beatrice, he said:—

"Do you know, Miss Evelyn, I have quite a spite against this ship?"

"Have you?" replied Beatrice, smiling, "I think it is a very pretty one."

"Yes, but it will soon take you so far away from us, and we shall feel so very lonely without you! you do not know how lonely."

Beatrice, still leaning over the side of the vessel, made no reply. She looked down at the clear blue water, which came rippling softly against the sides of the ship, and she felt that she too was sorry to part from Walter Grey, but she did not exactly know how to tell him so.

"Miss Evelyn," said Walter, "might I ask you to think of me sometimes, when you are away? It would be such a comfort to me to know that I was not forgotten by you?"

"Then you shall have that comfort, if it is any,"

said Beatrice, blushing slightly, "you have been so kind, both to dear Papa and myself, that I cannot easily forget you."

"Kind!" said Walter, in a low voice, "if you only knew the pleasure it has been to me even to be near you! I have wished I could spend my whole life in your service!"

"You must devote your life to God's service and not mine, Walter," said Beatrice, gently.

"But will you — oh, could you! — promise me to be my help and friend—my companion through life?" said Walter, earnestly, and he bent toward her, and took her hand in his.

Beatrice made no reply for some time, but stood averting her face and gazing down at the sea. At last she said:

"I must devote myself to dear Papa now—I cannot tell if I may ever come back again to America. But, Walter, I will be no one else's but your's, should God spare our lives to see each other again."

"My own Beatrice, God bless you for this," said Walter; "may our Heavenly Father send His blessing upon us both, and keep you safe to return to me again."

Mr. and Mrs. Grey just then came up from the cabin, and they all returned on shore. That evening Beatrice told her father of Walter's proposal, and asked his blessing on their engagement.

“My child,” said Mr. Evelyn, “I thank the Lord for it with my whole heart. Walter Grey has long had my sincere affection and esteem. He is an excellent young man, and I know, my darling, that he will make you a kind husband. You will now have a protector, in case I should be taken away from you, and the thought of what you and my little Hetty would do, if I were gone, has often been a burden on my mind during my hours of sickness ; but I cast my care on my Heavenly Father, and He has taken it from me. Promise me, my Bee, that you will always fill a mother’s place to your little sister.”

“Indeed I will, dear Papa,” said Beatrice, throwing her arms round her father’s neck ; “but do not talk in that way ; we all hope to see you quite well and strong again, after you have been to the sunny land. Do not let us prognosticate evil unnecessarily ; it makes me feel so unhappy. O ! I could not spare my own Papa !” she continued, laying her cheek fondly against his.

“Well, my Bee, I am certainly much better, and I would not willingly distress you, my child ; but we must be prepared, whenever the messenger shall come, you know.”

“Yes, Papa,” was her reply ; and gazing fondly at him, she sighed, as she thought there might be even a possibility of his words coming true.

"I wish you would go to Curzon-street early to-morrow morning," said Mr. Evelyn, "and tell your aunt Louisa I shall be glad to speak with her as soon as she can conveniently come over. And now you must use all the expedition you can, for you must have many things to get ready for Blanche and yourself. And you must look after my traps this time, dear one," said he, smiling; "I will draw on my bankers for any sum you may require."

Beatrice named the amount she thought sufficient, and during the next few days she had but few leisure moments, but we may be sure our friend Walter did not fail to find out when these occurred.

It was on the afternoon of the first of November that they set sail for the West Indies, and left America's shores behind them. Blanche shed many tears at leaving Hetty, but told her that she should send her some beautiful things back from the West Indies by Beatrice. Walter had busied himself with putting such little comforts as he could devise into Beatrice's cabin — among other things a ship-lamp, and a piece of matting for the floor, and also a few entertaining books to beguile the weary hours of sea-sickness. It was a hard trial to him to part with Beatrice now, and yet he felt that it was an unlooked-for happiness to have been assured of her love before she left. He determined to nerve himself to wait in patient faith and hope, trusting that

God would "make all things work together for their good"—and ere Beatrice bade him farewell, he obtained a promise from her that she would correspond with him regularly.

The first few days of their voyage were wretched enough, at least to Beatrice, who suffered very much from sea-sickness, the horrors of which can only be understood by those who have experienced it.

Mr. Evelyn was tolerably well, and Beatrice was very thankful for this, as she almost blamed herself for not being able to bestow more attention on him. Blanche, however, supplied her place as well as she could, having been but very slightly ill. Her lively manner made her a general favorite with the sailors, and wrapped up in a warm pelisse, the child would often pass hours upon deck, watching the men mending old sails or making other repairs, while they gave her such information as they had picked up in the course of a seafaring life. Her imperfect English, too, amused them, although it made her scarcely less voluble. It was curious and pleasant to feel the gradual increase of temperature as they moved Southward, and long before they reached their destination, they were glad to exchange their plaids and furs for cooler garments.

The soft warm breezes seemed to revive Mr. Evelyn, and sitting in an easy-chair on the deck, he passed many pleasant hours gazing at the glorious

sea, or at evening-time watching the bright sun setting beneath its waters in the West.

They had an unusually favorable passage for the time of year, and after Beatrice recovered from the sickness, she enjoyed it exceedingly.

It was on the evening of the 24th of November that the vessel anchored off the beautiful island of St. Thomas. The town is built, as it were, in the form of three open parasols,—the houses ascending gradually from the valley up the sides of the steep hills, which form the back-ground of the view from the sea. It belongs to the Danish government, and the fort presents a prominent object on the right hand of the picture—here dull looking soldiers marched about in blue uniform. The streets are lined with stores belonging to merchants of almost every nation under heaven—Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Jews, West India-creoles, Danes and Turks, are among some of them. The first thing that struck Beatrice, on their approaching the island, was the exquisite perfume of the oleanders, which adorn the gardens in profusion. The sweet odor was wafted far out to sea by the evening land-breeze, and it resembled exactly the scent of the heliotrope.

It was not too late in the day to land, so one of the ship's boats conveyed them and their luggage on shore. Arriving there, a crowd of negroes immediately surrounded them and began vociferously

demanding to be employed as porters to take the boxes and portmanteau to the hotel. Selecting a couple of them, Mr. Evelyn bade them go on before and show them the way to the best hotel.

"Hi! Massa," said one of them, grinning from ear to ear, "me show you him for true, sah! Massa Da Costa inn be good one, berry good, massa, ebery t'ing fine too much there."

The road from the shore led up a gentle slope, with cocoa-nut trees overshadowing it on either side. Beatrice's heart bounded with delight as she felt that she was now really in the tropics, and she gazed around her, highly amused and interested in all she saw. Crowds of negroes were walking or lounging about: those who were carrying anything, invariably placing their burden on their head, however large and unsuitable it might appear for such a position. Their gay cotton dresses, and the bright-colored handkerchiefs tied round their heads, also added greatly to the picturesque effect.

Blanche acted as show-woman, and began eagerly explaining all she could to Beatrice, while the latter entered into her feelings of admiration, with all the enthusiasm she could desire. As they went along, Blanche pointed out different stores which she remembered having been to with her aunt.

They soon, however, arrived at the hotel, and were shown into a very tolerable sitting-room, though at

first it looked rather comfortless to Beatrice's ideas, with its carpetless pine floors, rubbed as bright as possible, with here and there a few pieces of matting laid about. There were green jalousies to all the windows, but the walls were bare, with the exception of a few prints hung about. There was, fortunately, a sofa, on which Mr. Evelyn was glad to lie down and rest, for he was still very weak, and he then told Beatrice that she had better write a note to Madame de Tremonille and tell her of their arrival, that she might send to fetch them as soon as possible. The writing materials were in one of the boxes down stairs, and Blanche was dispatched to get one of the colored waiters to bring this up. The note was soon written and a messenger found to whom strict injunctions were given to be expeditious, for they were anxious to reach their destination before nightfall; and this the nonchalant, free-and-easy air of the bearer seemed to render doubtful. Being promised a reward, however, in proportion to his speed, he set off pretty quickly, and they sat patiently down to await the answer.

Madame de Tremonille's house was fully three miles from the town, so that it was two hours before they saw her carriage drive up to the inn door. It was now quite dusk, but the evening was most delightful, and the carriage holding four comfortably, Madame de Tremonille had come to fetch them

herself—being anxious again to embrace her little Blanche,—her adopted child. The latter rushed out of the room to meet her aunt as soon as she heard her footstep on the stairs, and in a moment they were locked in each other's arms.

“Ah ! ma Blanche ! ma chère, chère petite, que je suis ravie de te révoir !” said her aunt, fondly kissing her.

“I can speak English, too, now, aunty,” said Blanche. “Oh, how glad I am to see you ! but come quickly and see my dear papa Evelyn and my darling Beatrice !”

So saying, she seized her aunt by the hand and dragged her somewhat unceremoniously into the room. Mr. Evelyn and Beatrice rose to meet Madame de Tremonille, and were mutually struck with her very pleasing appearance. She was, of course, dressed in deep mourning for her late husband ; her features were soft and regular, and such of her fair hair as was allowed to appear beneath her close widow's cap, plainly bespoke her Saxon origin. She was, indeed, of English parentage ; her father was a minister of the Gospel, and he had only resided in the island about a year, when his daughter, Isabelle, married Monsieur de Tremonille, a French merchant of noble extraction, some six years ago. She was still young, apparently not more than thirty, and having been left in very comfortable circumstances

by her husband, and having no children of her own, she resolved on adopting the little orphan daughter of her brother.

There was a peculiarly sweet expression of chastened sorrow in her lovely countenance, which made Beatrice's heart warm toward her from the first. Advancing, she warmly thanked Mr. Evelyn for his kindness to Blanche, saying she could never sufficiently express her gratitude to him for restoring her safe and well, to be the comfort of her widowed heart.

"My dear Madam," said Mr. Evelyn, "I assure you the benefit has been ours. This little one has made our New York home quite lively, and my daughter was as delighted as possible to have her with her. Beside, I was ordered by my physician to take a trip southward for my health, which has been somewhat delicate of late—so you see that bringing her here personally, was not even the slightest inconvenience to me."

"Well! I hope I shall have a long time now to enjoy your society and show you, as well as I can, how grateful I feel," replied Madame de Tremonille, "I shall not let you leave my West Indian mountain home for a long time, and I hope soon to see you restored to health, under my care. But come, do not let us delay here any longer, I am impatient to see you all safe at home. Come, my

darling Blanche, take hold of my hand, you know I am to be your Mamma now."

"People seem able to have several Mammias and Papas," said Blanche, "I am sure it is a very nice thing! God is very good to me, for He sends me new ones whenever I want them."

"He will always be your friend, my little one," said her Aunt, "if you love Him and trust in Him: He will raise up some kind friend for each of us when He takes any dear one away"—and at these words the thought of her own deep and irreparable loss filled her eyes with tears, and she thought again, even as she spoke, that no earthly friend could fill to her the place of him who was gone, and a sickening feeling, almost of agony, shot through her heart, as she for a moment dwelt on that bitterest of all earthly griefs to a woman—the loss of a beloved husband. Oh! I have often, dear reader, when I have perchance passed in the street a gentlewoman in the garb of widowhood, experienced a mingled feeling of pity and respect for her, in thinking of her loss. It must be so very, very bitter to a woman's heart to part with him to whom she has given her early love—the spring-time of her affections. God help and pity the widow; and He alone can and will do it, for has He not promised to be "a God unto the widow." The comfortable and easy carriage bore the party rapidly along to their destination.

The night being dark, they had lamps lighted all the way, as in some parts the road was rough and precipitous. The fire-flies were dancing about right merrily, and Beatrice sat looking around her in silent ecstasy, too full of admiring wonder and too much influenced by the soothing balm of the soft air, to be inclined for much conversation.

In some places, where their road lay up a hilly ascent, and the declining ground on either hand formed a valley beneath them, the swarms of fire-flies produced a most dazzling effect; one might imagine a brilliant illumination of fairy lamps; or that the sky had fallen on the ground inverted, and that the stars were shining below. The hum of countless insects was heard on all sides, and the perfume of sweet flowers came wafted with the evening breeze.

As they drove up to Madame de Tremonille's house, it was, of course, too dark to discern surrounding objects plainly, but there were lights burning in several windows, and a negro servant standing in the porch with a lighted candle, to receive them, which as they drove up, enabled our travelers to see that it was a long building of only one story, but extending over a considerable extent of ground, and with a latticed veranda in front, covered with all kinds of luxuriant creepers.

"Here we are, at last," said Madame de Tremonille. "Well! Pomio, so you were expecting us, I see," continued she, as she alighted from the carriage.

"Yes! Missis, me hear de carriage comin' up de hill, and me no' want Missis for break e neck in de dark."

"Welcome! thrice welcome to Palm Hill," said his Mistress to Beatrice and her father, as they entered the hall; "I need not tell you how glad I am to see you within these walls. Here's Miss Blanche, you see, Pomio, come back to us again. Here Blanche, love, come and speak to old Pomio;" but Blanche was already running across the hall to meet Jeannette, her colored nurse, who stood timidly awaiting her in an adjoining room, the door of which opened into the hall, not daring to venture forward, as having some secret misgivings, whether Blanche's absence might not have made her too dignified a young lady to be romped with as of old. Her warm embrace, however, soon dispelled poor Jeannette's fears, and Pomio exclaimed to his mistress:—

"Hi! Missy Blanche, she lub somebody too much for true!"

After embracing Jeannette, Blanche ran into the kitchen, to see what friends she had left among its inmates, and also to discover if a favorite green

parrot, which used to hang outside the kitchen-porch, had been taken care of. Things seemed to prove satisfactory to her, for she remained absent so long, that her Aunt had to send Pomio to summon her to supper, which was awaiting our travelers in an airy, cheerful-looking dining-room. When the meal was concluded, Madame de Tremonille said to Mr. Evelyn, that she was sure he would be glad of rest, and that, therefore, she should, with his permission, immediately summon the servants to family prayers—"You will want a little time, too, to unpack your boxes, dear Miss Evelyn," she continued, "you know you must consider yourselves as domiciled with me for some time to come."

"Indeed! my dear Madam, you are very kind," returned Mr. Evelyn, "but it was only my intention to pay you a short visit, in order to return Blanche into your hands in person, and afterward to hire a small house in the neighborhood for myself and my daughter. It is probable my stay in the island may be for four or five months, and I think it would, therefore, be better, with your leave, to get settled as soon as possible."

"I assure you I will not hear of your doing such a thing," said Madame de Tremonille; "my house must be your house, my dear Sir, as long as you are in this island; no time will be too long for me; I shall be only delighted to have such pleasant com-

panions, and I have old, attached servants, who are accustomed to the ways of the house, so that there will be no trouble given at all, but only pleasure. I feel I shall love your dear Beatrice as a sister; you will let me call you Beatrice, will you not?" said she, kissing her—"I do not like formality." Beatrice returned her embrace warmly, while her eyes spoke the pleasure and happiness she felt.

CHAPTER V.

"Thousands of men breathe, move, and live, pass off the stage of life and are heard of no more. Live for something—do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue."—CHALMERS.

THE bright beams of the sun awoke Beatrice at an early hour the following morning, and on rising and looking out of her bed-room window, a glorious prospect presented itself. Immediately beneath her was a very prettily kept garden, the flowers of which were sending forth the sweetest perfumes, while here and there were grouped picturesque clusters of cocoanut and marango trees; among the boughs of the latter hundreds of bright humming-birds were dancing in and out with almost incredible velocity. Some of these tiny creatures were scarcely bigger than a humble-bee; others, again, a larger species, had a tail of two slender black feathers, which crossed each other delicately, and were nearly twice the length of their little emerald-green bodies. There was, again, a variety called the 'Doctor humming-bird,' a still larger and more sober-looking gentleman, dressed in purple, who seemed to make it a constant

practice to quarrel with all the other birds, and chase them from any tree on which he might have established himself. These marango trees had clusters of sweet-smelling white flowers, much resembling those of the acacia, and the honey contained in these attracted thither large numbers of the little fairy-like creatures. Looking lower down toward the valley, the town was seen dotted prettily about, with its bright party-colored buildings, tinted by the morning sun; and far in the distance, bounding the horizon, was the glorious blue sea, looking so calm, and clear, and peaceful.

Beatrice offered a fervent prayer of gratitude to the God who had made all things so beautiful. She prayed that her visit to the island might be of some service, both to herself and others, and that she might be enabled to let her Christian light burn clearly before all men. O! how she wished that Walter could have been there, to enjoy these beautiful scenes with her—and a shadow seemed for a moment to fall over her, as she thought of the distance which separated them—and then, again, the remembrance of his trusting words to her, as they stood on the deck together, that “God would surely work all things together for their good,” brought calm and comfort to her mind.

Descending from her chamber she found Madame de Tremonille and Blanche already in the veranda,

the latter running merrily about, while her aunt sat sipping a cup of coffee, and enjoying the fresh morning air. Blanche ran to kiss her, and Madame de Tremonille, after kindly inquiring after her health, said she did not know whether she were inclined immediately to adopt the West India fashion of taking coffee in the early morning, but that there was some ready for her if she chose to take it. Beatrice declined, but said she should be very glad to reconnoiter the pretty garden she had been admiring from her bed-room window.

“Well, then, we will all go together,” said Madame de Tremonille; “it is now half-past six, and in another hour or so, the sun will be unpleasantly warm, so come, Blanche, let us go at once.”

“I am going to run on before, Aunty; I want to see my chickens.”

“Well, go on, my child. I did not allow Pomio to wake your father, dear Beatrice, I thought he would require rest after his journey; he is looking very delicate. Has he been ill for any long period of time?”

Beatrice recounted the history of the fire, and its subsequent effects, in producing the severe cold from which her father was still suffering. “But I have great hopes,” she continued, “that this warm air may do him a great deal of good; you do not think

he looks so very ill, do you, dear Madame de Tremonille?"

"Call me Isabelle," replied her friend; "you know we are to be sisters, now. I feel it is no kindness to hide from you that, from what little I have seen of your father, there appears to me to be the greatest cause for anxiety, though still we may hope much from the change of climate. I can see already what a kind, true-hearted man he is, and how much you must love him; and I earnestly hope that any fears I have may prove groundless—you and I must take all the care of him we can. Put your trust in the Lord, my dear friend, and He will never fail you. When my own Eugene lay delirious with fever, before he was taken from me, I prayed so earnestly that I might be enabled to use our blessed Saviour's words: 'Father, not my will, but thine be done;' and though our parting, when it came, was a bitter trial, I feel that I was greatly strengthened under it. 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,'"—and she pressed Beatrice's hand as she spoke, while the tears stood in her eyes.

Just then little Blanche came running up with a nosegay for Beatrice, of the oleander and fragrant Spanish jessamine.

"Why do you look so sad?" said she; "come down the path and see what pretty chickens I have

got. Many little ones have come since I went away; and look, Nelly is feeding them, and I want to help her."

A little black girl, of about ten years old, Pomio's daughter, was busily engaged in throwing handfuls of chopped cocoa-nut among the fowls, who scrambled for it greedily.

"Now," said Blanche, laughing, "you shall be my large chicken, dear Beatrice, and I will give you a great piece of the cocoa-nut. Nelly!" she called out, "where did you put the pieces of cocoa-nut you did not cut up?"

"Under de big tree, dere, Missy Blanche, on de little wooden seat."

"O! yes, I see; and now here's a fine place for you two to rest, while Nelly and I finish feeding the chickens—and then, dear Mamma," said she, looking up coaxingly at Madame de Tremonille, "let us all take a walk up the hill behind the house, to widow Moore's. I should so like to see her—and you know, I can get on so much better now than when you used to have to tell her all I wanted to say."

Her aunt kissed her and nodded consent, and Blanche skipped happily away and quickly dispatched the business of feeding the chickens. It was through a very pretty path that the road lay to widow Moore's house; the first part was up a steep

ascent, but it was shaded by trees nearly the whole way, and then descending a gentle inclination, a small cottage, thatched with cocoa-nut branches, presented itself to their view.

“O! there is widow Moore, coming from the spring, with a jug of water on her head,” said Blanche, as she ran forward to meet her. The others slowly followed: “This poor woman,” said Madame de Tremonille, “is such a simple-minded, earnest Christian, and is such a really useful and estimable person, that I shall be glad for you to know her. She lost her husband some years ago, and was left with an only son, the very idol of her heart. She will be sure to speak to you of her ‘poor boy,’ as she calls him, before she has seen you long. This son married some three years ago, and still continued to reside with his mother till about ten months ago, when he died of fever. It was a sad case—his wife lay in the small room adjoining that in which he died, in the agonies of child-birth, unable to receive her husband’s dying blessing and farewell; and the poor little fatherless boy you see in that young woman’s arms at the cottage door, is the little child he never lived to welcome into the world. The two widows still live together, cherishing the little baby as all that is left to remind them of their lost William. But here is Mrs. Moore coming to meet us. Did you ever see such a child as Blanche

for making friends with every one? Look how she holds that poor woman by the hand, chatting to her as fast as possible!"

"She is a dear little warm-hearted creature," replied Beatrice.

"Well, Mrs. Moore," said Madame de Tremonille, "so you see I have found my little truant again!"

"Indeed, Missus," said the widow, making a respectful salutation, "I am glad enough to see her bright little face again—and she is so improved in her speaking, too—the dear child."

"I have brought a friend of mine, too, to see you, Mrs. Moore," said Madame de Tremonille, turning to Beatrice, "the daughter of the American gentleman, who, as I told you, was so kind to little Blanche; and he has brought her home safe to me himself; but I am sorry to say he is not at all well, and I think I shall have to get you to come and prescribe some of your favorite remedies for him. You must know, Beatrice, that Mrs. Moore is quite a celebrated nurse and doctress in these parts."

"Not much to boast of, Miss," returned the widow; "but come in, ladies, and rest yourselves awhile before you go home."

They entered the house, which, though small, was scrupulously neat. A rather pretty young quadroon woman, little William's mother, sat dancing her

child on her knee, singing to him, at the same time, a wild sort of melody — which she ceased on the entrance of the visitors.

A large Bible lay open on a small, rough wooden table, near the door, while a few stools and one rocking-chair completed the furniture of the room. The windows had no panes of glass, but consisted merely of wooden jalousies, which could be opened or shut at pleasure. There was one sleeping apartment, and a small shed outside, used for cooking — the heat of the climate rendering it very inconvenient to carry on any culinary operations in the house: indeed, in almost all West India houses, the kitchen is, for this reason, placed at a distance from the dwelling.

“Well, Lucy, and how is your little boy?” said Madame de Tremonille, as she patted the little bright-eyed fellow on the cheek.

“Willy is fine, thank ye, Missis,” said the mother, gazing fondly at the little smiling rogue in her arms.

“I do not think I saw you at church on Sunday, Mrs. Moore,” said Madame de Tremonille; “it is quite an unusual thing to see your place empty?”

“Indeed, Missis, I am sorry myself whenever it is empty; but our neighbor, old Joe Ward, is very sick, and he sent for me, a little before church-time, to ask me to go and see him. The poor old creature

lives all alone, except that little, wild grandchild of his, who isn't often there, and he seemed so downhearted and sick, I thought I would stay with him and read and pray a bit. He looks a poor broken-down old man, and certainly, Missis, he's none of the handsomest to look at, but I believe he's surely a pilgrim on his road to glory, and a child of God, if there ever was one in this world."

"Ah!" said Madame de Tremonille, "that old black man, with his poor withered, and almost deformed body, will shine as gloriously, and obtain, perhaps, a far richer inheritance, than many of those who, with lovely face and noble forms, have not served their God as faithfully as he has—with all his hinderances of poverty, and, I believe, persecution, to contend with."

"Persecution indeed, Missis," said Mrs. Moore; "when his son and daughter-in-law were alive they used to worry old Joe night and day about his religion, and if they saw him go down on his knees to pray, or take up his Bible, it was a signal for ill-treatment and harsh words. You see, Missis, the house was but small, and when they saw the old man wanted to have a quiet time to himself, they would just make all the noise and confusion they could, and so at last he used to make it his practice to go out of doors and get in some shady place, under a tree, where he thought he should not be

disturbed, and there pray to his Saviour so sweetly, that sometimes, when I have been passing anywhere near, I have stopped to listen till I felt my heart warm too. Well, they that persecuted him were taken away by death, and in the time of their sickness they did seem to show some little contrition toward the old man, and begged him to forgive them for all their unkindness to him. He certainly bore them no ill-will, for he was always as gentle and kind to them, as if they had been the best children possible, and he takes good care of their little one, now they are gone — though she's but a graceless child, too — and I hope he may not be disappointed in her. Before he took sick, many and many a time has he come down to have a time of prayer with me and Lucy, and our poor William. But now, I think, he's failing fast, and is not long for this world. Our good minister, Mr. Campbell, has been to see him several times lately, and this has been a great comfort to the poor old man. He is such a kind gentleman — I love to see him enter my door; what he says always seems to help me, and do me good."

"We are indeed blessed in our minister," replied Madame de Tremonille; "but come, it must be breakfast-time, and we had better be going home," continued she, moving toward the door—"come to me, Mrs. Moore, for any little delicacy you think

old Joe might fancy. I will come and see him myself, if I can, to-morrow."

"Who is this Mr. Campbell?" said Beatrice, as they slowly wended their way toward the house.

"He is the minister of a small Scotch church, recently established near here," was the reply; "I will show you the neat building when we shall have turned the brow of the hill. His cure lies among the small hamlets scattered along the valley, below our house. His congregation consists chiefly of colored people, but there are several white families who attend regularly—ours among others. Indeed, I have myself lately become a member of his church, and this for several reasons. One is, that I believe his preaching to be faithful, and his views scriptural, and that he endeavors to preach Christ to the people. Another is, that the nearest church in the town is two miles and a half from home, and I do not like to use my servants and horses on the Sabbath, when I can avoid doing so; and beside, if we attend any church, I think, we should, if possible, be regular and constant in attending all the services which are held there. I do not approve of the plan of just going to church once on the Sabbath, when the minister thinks it fitting and advantageous to have a second service, that the people may at least have an opportunity of meeting together twice on the Lord's day. I do not think it becomes a professing Christian to

be willingly absent from such a means of grace. It is not the form of going to church *twice* that I look to; it is, that where a person is a true Christian, they will love to meet together with other believers, to serve their common Lord."

"How many people there are, though," said Beatrice, "who seem to think they have quite performed their duty, if they just go and 'show themselves' at church once on the Sabbath; they seem to think it a sort of necessary duty done, and out of the way—and the rest of the day is spent in frivolous conversation, or in reading books of general literature, which, though very good in their way, are certainly not calculated to lead our thoughts to that Lord who has commanded us to keep His day holy: 'not following our own thoughts, nor speaking our own words.'"

"I think," said Madame de Tremonille, "that it is a pity, that many well-meaning Christian parents, by an unnecessary strictness and severity of discipline, should create a distaste in the minds of their children for the duties of the Sabbath—and when these children grow up, and throw off parental restraint, they will be the more likely, if not converted, to disregard even the decent observance of the day. I would not allow a child to play the same games, or read the same books, as on the week-days, but I would find something to afford

some relaxation to the mind after the hours of public worship, which might still be of a gentle and quiet nature, befitting a holy day of rest—God's day—and yet enough to keep the mind and body from weariness from being kept on the stretch during the whole day. This was the plan pursued with me, by my dear mother, in England, when I was a child. Although she never allowed me to follow my own fancy about going to church, as some mothers do—permitting any trivial excuse pleaded to be a cause of non-attendance—yet she never made my going seem irksome to me, for she always spoke of it as the greatest treat and privilege, and as what no right-minded Christians would ever willingly absent themselves from. I could see how *she* looked forward to going to God's house—how she always made it a point to be there early, so as to lose no part of the precious service, and I used to think it very, very nice, to be allowed to go with her. In the afternoon, she used to take me with her to the parish-school, and when I was old enough I had a class of little ones to teach myself, and this was a source of great pleasure and interest. When we came home, I was allowed to go into the garden, or occupy myself in any quiet way for an hour or two. Then she would call me, and we read together out of the Bible, or some book of simple religious

instruction, allegories, memoirs, etc. O! how well I remember going through the Pilgrim's Progress, and the delight it gave me. After that, my mother would open the piano, and sing sweet hymns, while I would join as well as I could, and dear Papa, too, if he happened to be there. After tea, there was the evening service at the church, and then, as a Sunday treat, I was always allowed to sit up to supper with papa and mamma. My Sundays, dear Beatrice, were looked forward to and not dreaded, and I have loved the Sabbath ever since. I do not mean to say that every child brought up to regard the Sabbath thus, would love it and look forward to it, but such a course has most certainly a tendency to produce that effect; and I think I may say that the cordial love felt by both my parents, for God's word, His day, and His ordinances, was the means, under Him, of bringing my heart to the Saviour. I had many, many advantages; I was the child of much prayer, and I feel how very much Christian parents may do for the souls of their children; how seldom do we see the children of praying fathers and mothers die unconverted. The ground may lie fallow for years, but if good seed be sown, it will assuredly spring up into life some day."

"I suppose you intend pursuing much such a plan as that you mentioned, with regard to Blanche," said

Beatrice; "she is a dear little docile thing, and better than that, indeed, for she seems to have been taught to know and love the Saviour by her poor father. He was a Christian, was he not?"

"Indeed he was, an earnest and devoted one," said Madame de Tremonille. "I, as you know, had only the pleasure of knowing him for about six months; but he was not the kind of man who would 'hide his light under a bushel.' He loved God, and he was not ashamed to own Him before men. It may be fancy, but I have sometimes thought that I could see 'the light shining through,' on the face of any one particularly full of God's Spirit; and it was so with him, to a remarkable degree."

"O! I know what you mean," replied Beatrice. "I remember, once, Papa took me walking with him to see a poor carpenter, with whom he had some business; and I really seemed to feel, directly I saw him, that he was a Christian—and the idea was confirmed when he began to speak—there seemed such a heavenly, happy expression on his countenance. But I do not think, dear Isabelle, (and Beatrice looked at her companion and smiled, as she pronounced the name,) that I have observed this in many Christians, have you?"

"No, indeed; I am sorry to say that most of God's children allow the clouds and mists of sin to be far

too thick and strong for much light to shine at all. But, I think, the reason is, that they do not live near enough to Him—not sufficiently in personal communion with Him. I have seen that, at times, in my dear Eugene's face, which plainly told me he had been with Jesus, when, perhaps, I had been absent from the house, and quite unaware of how he had been engaged! Oh! it is such a comfort, dear Beatrice,—such an inexpressible comfort,—to think of these things, now that he is gone.”

“Oh! how bitterly a Christian woman must rue it, in after life, when she has been tempted, from worldly causes, to marry an unbeliever,” said Beatrice.

“Bitterly, indeed; but we have quite strayed away from Mr. Campbell, of whom you were asking me. He is such a faithful man; his work here is really quite a missionary one, for his salary is exceedingly small, and his congregation poor and scattered; but I will let you judge of him when you have seen him. I hope, dear Beatrice, that whenever you marry, it may be a man as earnest and devoted as he is.

Beatrice blushed, and said: “Yes, indeed, I believe, I think it—is so—”

“What!” said Madame de Tremonille, looking at her, and smiling as she spoke; “so that's the case,

is it? So you have left your heart in New York, have you? Do tell me who it is—I am so glad—I know you will make such a good wife.”

“Thank, you,” said Beatrice, laughing; “but now we are at the house, so I will wait till after breakfast to satisfy your curiosity. I must really go and see how dear Papa is—he will be awake, and wondering what has become of me.”

Blanche joined them at the gate; she had strayed away in search of flowers, and by the time she reached home, she was quite ready for her breakfast.

“Do not be long,” said Madame de Tremonille, “we shall wait for you; and I want you to tell me what your Papa will fancy to eat. I suppose they would think our West India breakfast an odd one in New York, would they not, Blanche?”

“Yes, indeed, dear Mamma, I do not think they would get used to eating plantain and yam, early in the morning, at first. You know, I did not like it, when I first came from France,—everything tasted so funny to me.”

“So it did to me, darling; but you see I have been so long here, I am becoming quite a creole.”

“What do you mean by that word *creole*, Mamma? Am I a creole?”

“No, dearest. Creoles, properly speaking, are European people’s children who have been born in the West Indies, but the term is now generally

applied to all who are natives of the islands, whether white or colored. You are not a creole, because, you know, you were born in France; and I am not a creole, for I was born in England."

"Then, is Judge Green's little baby a creole, Mamma?" said Blanche, thoughtfully.

"Yes, dearest; you know she was born just before you left for America. Don't you remember going with me to see it, and being afraid to touch the tiny creature, lest you should hurt it?"

"O! yes, to be sure!" said Blanche, laughing; "but I was littler then than I am now; I have seen several babies since then."

"And the baby was 'littler,' as you call it, too; she has grown a nice little girl—I will take you to see her some day, if you are good."

"I hope I shall be good, dear Mamma; oh! it is so nice to be here with you again, and to have Beatrice here too. You can't think how kind she was to me in New York—she was so gentle, and she used to teach me so many things. I was thinking, this morning, when I was out gathering flowers, of a pretty hymn she once gave me to learn. May I repeat it to you?"

"Do, my child!"

Blanche began to repeat the beautiful hymn, beginning—"I want to be like Jesus;" pronouncing the words slowly and carefully, lest her imperfect

pronunciation should destroy the effect on her aunt's mind.

When she had finished, her aunt thanked her, and kissed her fondly; and just then the door opened and Beatrice entered. She looked pale and distressed, and said she had found her father extremely weak and exhausted, his cough having been very troublesome during the night.

"Oh! dear, I am sorry to hear so bad an account," said Madame de Tremonille; "do you not think it would be better to send for medical advice? I can recommend a physician, whom I believe to be very skillful."

"Well! I really think I will venture to send for him, on my own responsibility, without consulting Papa," replied Beatrice. "He looks so very ill that I cannot feel easy till he has seen a doctor, and yet, in another hour he might feel so much better as to oppose our sending for one."

Madame de Tremonille arranged several little tempting delicacies on a tray, and dispatched them to Mr. Evelyn by Pomio, and then told Beatrice that she must come and eat some breakfast on pain of her serious displeasure. When the latter had seated herself at the table, Madame de Tremonille said, that she thought she would drive down into the town herself, after breakfast; that she had some shop-

ping to do, and that she could call at Dr. Mason's at the same time. "I should be glad if you could come with me, dear Beatrice," she continued; "but perhaps you would hardly like to leave your father—but do as you like best."

"Thank you, I will stay with Papa," replied Beatrice, "and I want very much to write home—I know Hetty will be expecting a letter."

"And somebody else, too, eh?" said her friend, laughing—"Come now, dear Beatrice, tell me who your intended is, and what he is like, or I shall not be able to eat my breakfast for curiosity."

Beatrice colored and laughed—"Well now," said she, "where am I to begin? at the color of his eyes, or his hair, or his age and height—or what?"

"Anything you like, as long as you give me a good idea of him."

Beatrice recounted, in as few words as possible, the history of her acquaintance with Walter Grey, and described his prospects, and character, and disposition. It is true, that the sketch was painted with the rosy light of love—but it was about a correct one, after all.

"I think he is such a very nice young man, Aunty," said Blanche—"he was always so kind to me. Hetty, and all of us liked him so much—and he is handsome, too."

"Well! I only hope he is worthy of your friend, Beatrice, my child; but run now and tell Jeannette to get you ready to go to town with me; you would like to come, would you not?"

"O! yes, Aunty, very much."

"Well then, dear, go now and do not be long. You had better run into the kitchen first, and tell Cato to bring the carriage round as soon as he can, for I want to set off before the sun gets too hot."

CHAPTER VI.

Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
Since God was thy ransom, thy guardian, thy guide,
He gave thee, He took thee, and soon will restore thee,
Where death has no sting since the Saviour has died.

BISHOP HEBER.

“The dead are like the stars by day,
Withdrawn from mortal eye.”

THE next few days spent at Palm Hill, slipped rapidly away, unmarked by any particular event. Mr. Evelyn, who had rallied a little, used to lie, during the greater part of the day, on a lounge in the veranda, while little Blanche would fan him gently, and Beatrice read aloud. In the cool of the evening, when he was well enough, he used to take a drive in Madame de Tremonille's carriage; but he did not seem to rally as much as his friends had hoped, and his cough was now accompanied by slight hemorrhage from the lungs, and the doctor and Madame de Tremonille thought him failing fast; but Beatrice could not help persuading herself that he would soon be better, and that the present great weakness was only the result of the voyage and of his long sickness in New York.

Certainly, there were times when her father would seem quite cheerful, and enter into conversation with almost the liveliness and animation of old times—and then his daughter's sanguine disposition made her ready to believe, that in a few weeks, he would be quite well again.

When thus free from anxiety on his account, Beatrice used to enter with the greatest zest into exploring different parts of the island, collecting curiosities, sketching, etc. She soon amassed a goodly amount of delightful horrors, such as fine centipedes, scorpions, lizards and snakes, which she carefully put up in spirits of wine to show to Walter and Hetty.

Beatrice could draw very nicely, and she found abundant subject for her pencil—what with the beautiful and luxuriant foliage—the picturesque dwellings, and the diversified scenery, she made a small, but very pretty water-color drawing of Palm Hill, and inclosed it in a letter home; and Madame de Tremonille was so delighted with it, that she begged Beatrice to draw one for her on a larger scale—that she might have it framed and hang it in her room, for a keepsake.

There was an English merchant, of the name of Gisborne, residing at a very pretty place, about half a mile from Palm Hill: he had a wife and several children, all grown up, and they were exceedingly kind and pleasant people. One or two of the daugh-

ters were musical, and they were delighted with Beatrice's sweet voice; and when her father was well enough, she would often go over to Shady Grove, to practice with them.

Three or four times, Mr. Gisborne hired a boat and took them all out, in the early morning, for a row along the coast—they used to drive down to the shore as soon as daylight broke, and get back home again ere the sun had become unpleasantly powerful. Beatrice and Blanche were always delighted to be of the party, but Madame de Tremonille hardly felt inclined to join them, so soon after her husband's death.

One morning, after the Evelyns had been about a month in the island, Beatrice was returning from one of these expeditions, with little Blanche, and on coming near the house, Madame de Tremonille met them, with an expression of sadness and anxiety on her face. Beatrice eagerly and breathlessly asked her if anything was wrong.

“My dear girl,” she replied, “I am afraid your father is very ill. About half an hour ago, he rang his bell, and when Pomio went to his room, he found him lying on the bed, bleeding profusely from the mouth, and unable to speak. I sent for widow Moore, instantly, as I scarcely knew what to do myself, and she is with him now, and I also dispatched Pomio on horseback, for the doctor.

Beatrice rushed along the passage, without reply-

ing; she only clasped her hands together, and said, "Oh! that I should have been out!—poor Papa!"

"I am surprised you did not meet Pomio, as you came up the hill, from Shady Grove, Blanche," said Madame de Tremonille, "are you sure he did not pass you?"

"Oh! yes, dear Mamma, I'm sure we should have seen him," replied Blanche, looking very pale. "If you please, Missis," said Jeannette, who had just come into the room, to fetch Blanche to change her dress, "I t'ink Pomio must have pass de oder way, t'rough de estate de Monsieur Everette; it is a leetle more short for de horseback, though it not do for carriage."

"Ah! you are right, Jeannette; I did not think of that."

"Venez, Mademoiselle Blanche, s'il vous plait, il faut que je vous habille pour le déjeuner."

"Oui, Jeannette, but you can talk English, to Maman; I like you speak it to me, too—but come, Jeannette, we must go very softly along the passage, now poor Mr. Evelyn is so sick. Should you think he was so very bad?" continued she, as they entered the pretty little room appropriated to her use.

"Pomio say, in de kitchen," replied Jeannette, "dat he t'ink he no live long; ah! la pauvre Mademoiselle Beatrice, dat will make her too much sorrow."

But we must follow Beatrice, to her father's room. Stopping one moment at the door, she forcibly endeavored to control her feelings, lest her sudden entrance might excite her father too much: softly opening the door, she saw him lying perfectly still, with his eyes shut, looking very pale, while Mrs. Moore was sitting on a low stool at the foot of the bed. She rose, when she saw Beatrice, and put her finger on her lips, to enjoin silence.

"Do not speak to him, dear lady, but only let him know that you are here."

Beatrice pressed her lips gently on his forehead, and Mr. Evelyn opened his eyes, and softly pressed her hand. He moved his lips to speak, but he could not do so.

"God bless you, my own dear Papa," whispered Beatrice, in a voice trembling from suppressed emotion, "what shall I do for you? If you could only make me some sign to tell me if you are suffering pain or not!"

Mr. Evelyn shook his head. Shortly after he joined his hands in the attitude of prayer, and nodded to Beatrice—she understood that he wished her to pray, and she knelt softly down by the side of the bed; Mrs. Moore knelt too, and that prayer seemed to comfort all their hearts; and on Mr. Evelyn's face, when they arose, there was an ex-

pression of happiness, and holy resignation. Beatrice sat down quietly to await the doctor's coming; her heart was very sad; she felt as though her dear father were about to be taken from her—and how should she bear it? alone, away from home, in a foreign land.

Once there came a gentle tap at the door; it was Blanche, who had been sent by Madame de Tremonille to inquire after Mr. Evelyn. Beatrice gave her a message to take to her aunt, and her voice trembled as she did so.

Blanche looked very much awed at the sight of Beatrice's grief. She longed to throw her arms round her neck and comfort her, but she felt a child's instinctive reverence for sorrow, and she only stood patiently and sadly awaiting the answer, and then glided noiselessly along the passage.

The doctor arrived shortly after, and when he left her father's room, Beatrice waited for him in the veranda. "Doctor Mason," said she, "will you tell me candidly and sincerely if we have reason for alarm?"

"My dear young lady, I should think it false kindness were I to hide from you the real state of the case. Your father will rally, I expect, in a day or two, and he may linger, perhaps, for some weeks, but longer than that you may not hope to have him with you. He has not, naturally, a very strong

constitution, and this severe cold has settled on his lungs in too dangerous a form, to be materially alleviated by the change of climate. Such, I am sorry to say, is the truth, since you ask it from me."

Beatrice felt ready to sink under the blow of the intelligence, but she commanded her voice sufficiently to reply: "Thank you; it is far better that I should know the worst."

"Do not hesitate to send for me at any hour of the day or night, when I may be of use," said Dr. Mason, as he mounted his horse. "Good-by, young lady, pray remember to keep your father as quiet as possible."

Beatrice went into the drawing-room to seek Madame de Tremonille. She found her engaged in writing, and said to her: "Isabelle, I have just seen the doctor, and—"

"Well, dear, and what is his report?" said Madame de Tremonille, tenderly, laying down her pen as she spoke.

Beatrice laid her head on her friend's shoulder and burst into tears. Madame de Tremonille suffered her to weep uninterruptedly for a minute or so, and then said, in a whispered voice: "Do not worry yourself to tell me, dear Beatrice, I can see how it is. May the Lord comfort you, my dear girl, under this great trial. Lean on Him in your weakness, dear Beatrice."

“I do—I will,” sobbed she, “but oh! my dear Papa, what shall I do without him?”

As the doctor had expected, Mr. Evelyn was considerably revived, the following day, and was soon able to be wheeled to the porch door, in an easy-chair, to enjoy the cool sea-breeze; but it was like the flickering flame of a candle, about to expire. Some days, he would appear tolerably well, and be able to talk with his daughter, for some time together, but at night, his cough was unceasing, and he was scarcely able to lie down at all, but was propped up in his bed with pillows.

Beatrice was with him, as much as possible, but she found Mrs. Moore a most valuable assistant. During Mr. Evelyn's illness, he was frequently visited by Mr. Campbell, the young Scotch minister, of whom we have spoken before. Their intercourse was a source of mutual gratification; in Mr. Evelyn, Mr. Campbell found an experienced Christian, ripened for eternity, and one to whose matured judgment he could look for advice, in his ministerial difficulties; and Mr. Evelyn was delighted with the freshness of heart—the simple faith, and earnestness of the young minister.

Sometimes, when Mr. Evelyn was strong enough to bear it, the whole household would assemble in his room, while Mr. Campbell expounded a chapter in the Bible, and prayed—and these were sweet and

solemn occasions, the influence of which was felt by all.

Late one afternoon, Mr. Evelyn was sitting in an easy-chair near his bedroom window; Beatrice was at work near him; the sun was just setting, and as he gazed at its departing glories, Beatrice saw his lips move in prayer: she thought of those beautiful lines of Peabody's—

“Behold, the western evening light,

It melts in deepening gloom—

So calmly, Christians sink away,

Descending to the tomb.”

Her father knew that death was approaching, but for him, he was no King of terrors. He had been taught by faith, to overcome the dread which our poor human bodies feel, at the thought of corruption, and his spirit longed to be with its Saviour.

“My Bee,” he said at length, “I sometimes seem to feel your dear mother’s spirit so near to me, it seems as though I could almost hear her speaking. I feel so this evening—I feel as though she were about to welcome me to that happy land, whither she has gone before. ‘My Mary,’ he continued, closing his eyes with a dreamy look, ‘I shall soon come to thee, to part no more for eternity! It is but a short journey—a little stage—and I shall be on the other side.’ O! my Saviour, I thank thee, that thou hast taught me to love and know thee. I

bless thee, that I can say, thou art *my* Redeemer. 'Lord, when shall I behold thy face, and stand complete in righteousness!' My own Bee—my darling child—come and kiss me. I leave you and Hetty to the care of your heavenly Father; I thank Him that you, my child, have given your heart to Him; oh! watch over your sister with a mother's care—she is often impulsive, and thoughtless, but careful attention and guidance will do much. My Bee, when you and Walter are married, do not let your sister leave you; she would not be happy, in New York, with her aunt. I have provided for the latter in my will, so that she will not be a burden on you; and to my two dear children, with but a few trifling exceptions, I leave the rest of what I possess. I feel sure, that some way will be provided for you, to leave this island, but till that time, I know, Madame de Tremonille will give you a home here—"

Beatrice had risen, and stood motionless behind his chair, the tears streaming down her face, but she would not interrupt the precious words of her dying father with any sudden outburst of grief. She controlled herself to say:

"Dear Papa, all shall be as you wish—I will take care of Hetty."

"Do you think Mr. Campbell will be here this evening, dearest?" said Mr. Evelyn; "I should

like to see him once more before I die. I feel as if I could encourage him to hold on. O! the prize is worth contending for! I feel, I feel it is."

"Shall we send and tell him, dear Papa?" said Beatrice; "I can send Nelly over to the Manse, if you wish it?"

"Do so, love; I feel I have not long to be with you, my Bee."

"Dear Papa, oh! why do you say so? you do not look worse, this evening, than you have done of late. I am sure, if you lie down, you will feel better."

Her father looked up at her, and there was on his face such an expression of death, and yet of holy calm, that Beatrice's countenance changed—the color left her face, and laying her head on his shoulder, she burst into tears. O! Papa, Papa!" she sobbed, "what shall I do without you?"

"God comfort you, my own best child; do not grieve—I am so happy, and our separation is but for a little while."

Beatrice made no reply—she lay perfectly still for a few moments, and then glided softly out of the room and went in search of Madame de Tremonille, to whom she expressed her father's wish to see Mr. Campbell. Nelly was instantly dispatched for him, and Beatrice sat down on the sofa by her friend's side, and told of all her father had just been saying.

"He seems to feel his end near," continued she; "and oh! I have been convinced of it, for the first time, myself: he seemed to rally so often, I could not fancy that the dreaded hour was so near. But oh! Isabelle, is it not glorious to see how a Christian can die! My dear father! he seems so happy. He seems to long to be with Jesus."

"Yes, dear Beatrice, such an instance of triumphant faith is very, very precious to other Christians. It shows them that what they are striving after is not a myth, a phantom, a dream; but a certainty, sufficient to uphold and comfort, when passing through the dark valley. I feel, dear Beatrice, what a tie there is between Christians. I esteem it an honor to have entertained, in my house, one so ripe for eternity as your father."

Beatrice kissed her, and a smile shone through her tears as she did so.

Just then the clatter of a horse's hoofs was heard coming up the avenue. It was Dr. Mason, and they heard him pass through the veranda, and along the passage to Mr. Evelyn's room.

"Stay, dear Beatrice," said Madame de Tremonille, rising, "I will just go into the kitchen and tell Pomio to station himself in the porch and watch for the doctor's going out, that he may come in and tell us the report."

During this time, Blanche had been sitting in a niche of the window, half-shaded by the muslin window-curtain; Beatrice was first aware of her presence by hearing a low sob proceeding from the opposite end of the room, and looking up, she saw Blanche sitting with her face between her hands, crying bitterly. "Blanche, dear child, come here," said Beatrice.

A tearful little face it was that was raised at her call, but springing forward, Blanche threw her arms round Beatrice's neck and wept afresh.

"What is the matter, dear Blanche?" said Beatrice, gently kissing her.

"O! dear Beatrice, I cannot bear to see you so unhappy; it is so dreadful to hear you cry, and I have just seemed to walk about, lately, and be near you, and yet I dared not ask you how you felt, or how dear Mr. Evelyn was, and you never seemed to speak to me yourself—so I was afraid to trouble you."

"Dear child! forgive me," said Beatrice—"I know I ought to have spoken more to you, but I was thinking so much, you know, of dear Papa; you must not think me unkind—I did not mean to be so."

"Oh! no, no," said Blanche, earnestly; "I know you would never do anything unkind, but I did so

long for a word from you ; and then when you came and cried so, talking to Mamma, why, I could not help crying too."

"Well! now, sit quietly here on my knee, dear ; I cannot talk much now, for I am very anxious to know what Dr. Mason thinks of dear Papa. Here, rest your head against my shoulder, and we will wait together."

Madame de Tremonille looked anxious too ; her work dropped from her fingers, and she sat alternately looking at the door and at Beatrice. In another minute or two, came a gentle tap at the door, and a gentleman entered—it was Mr. Campbell. Madame de Tremonille rose to shake hands with him, and whispered a few words to him, explaining the state of the case, and then they advanced to the sofa, and Beatrice roused herself to welcome him.

"I am sorry to hear so bad an account of your father, Miss Evelyn," said Mr. Campbell, seating himself—"at least, sorry for your sake ; for himself, we cannot but rejoice that he hopes so soon to be free."

Beatrice made a gesture of assent, but she did not trust herself to speak.

"I had just come from seeing old Joe Ward," said Mr. Campbell, turning to Madame de Tremonille, "when your little messenger arrived. He is

lingering long, but he is very resigned and happy; have you seen him lately?"

"I was there only the day before yesterday," was the reply. "He is a remarkable instance, I think, of the truth of that saying of our Saviour—'He hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto *babes*.' What advantages of instruction and education has this poor old negro had? and yet he has as deep an experience in the things of God, and as intimate a communion with Him, as the most learned and talented could have. I am sure it has often astonished me, when sitting by his side, to perceive the depth of his acquaintance with both the words of the Bible and their spiritual meaning."

"O! old Ward has been a Christian for many years, and living so near God, he has learned to know something of Him."

Pomio now softly opened the door, and ushered in Dr. Mason. As he advanced and greeted the party, Mr. Campbell asked him how he found Mr. Evelyn, for Beatrice dared not speak.

"I find him advanced a long way upon his journey," was the reply—"he is almost on the river's brink."

"How? Doctor, is it indeed so near?" said Madame de Tremonille, gently.

"I may not tell you otherwise—the shadow of

this night will, I think, be the shadow of the valley of death for him, and the morning's dawn shall usher in the Sun of Righteousness which knows no setting."

Beatrice gave a convulsive shudder, but hid her face against Blanche's shoulder.

"Young lady," said the doctor, going up to her—"I must now go, for I have a patient waiting for me; but let me tell you one thing. I have found it a blessing to attend upon your dear father. I feel my own hopes brighter and my faith more settled. Good-by! God bless you!"

Beatrice pressed his hand. After a few moments' silence, Beatrice looked up—"Oh!" she said, "this is sudden—is it not? I little thought it was so near! Dear Papa! I must go to him, and not lose the precious moments that are left."

Mr. Evelyn was lying quietly in bed, when Beatrice entered; she went up and threw her arms round him, saying—"Oh! Papa, Papa!"

"My child!" said Mr. Evelyn, "the messenger has come at last. I shall soon have done with pain, and care, and sorrow. Look up, my Bee! look up! it is all bright!"

"I will! Papa, I will!" sobbed she; "but the parting is hard."

"Heavenly Father!" murmured the dying man, "to Thy protection I leave this dear one. Hide her

under the shadow of thy wings, O Lord! A father's fondest blessing rest on thee and thy sister, my child!" There was a pause.

"Is Mr. Campbell here, love?"

"Yes! Papa, he is in the drawing-room with Madame de Tremonille and Blanche."

"Tell them all to come, I want to see them once more before I die."

Beatrice found Mrs. Moore waiting in the passage, and telling her to summon them, she returned to her father's room, and sitting down on a low chair, she hid her face against the bed.

Mr. Evelyn held out his hand, as his friends came softly into his room — and it was gently pressed by each of them. They stood around his bed.

"My dear sir," said he to Mr. Campbell, "fight the good fight of faith; do not be discouraged. I find how blessed is the reward; strive to gather in souls to Christ—to be zealous in his cause, and He will strengthen your hands. We shall meet above! God bless you!"

"To you, dear Madam," said he, turning his eyes on Madame de Tremonille, "let me offer my sincere thanks for all your kindness to me and my daughter since we have been here. God will bless you for it; you are still young, — work for Christ. You have lost your dearest earthly friend; let this knit your heart closer to Jesus. I ask you to take care of my

daughter, till her friends in America shall provide an escort for her—I know you will do this for a fellow Christian.

“What I have done or can do for her, I feel to be nothing,” was the reply; “my house shall be her home as long as ever she chooses to make it so.”

“Thank you; the blessing of a dying man rest on you.”

“Blanche, dear little one, follow Christ; give Him your whole heart now, when you are young. Be a comfort to your adopted mother, and repay her kindness. The Lord bless you!”

“Let widow Moore and Pomio come in, and any of the others who choose. I have a word for them.”

The servants collected in a group at the foot of the bed, while Mr. Evelyn gave them a parting charge and benediction, and then Mr. Campbell made a movement with his hand, and all knelt in prayer.

Prayer by the bed-side of the dying believer has something in it peculiarly solemn. It is the last mutual intercourse of the survivors and the departing, with that God to whose care the dear one is about to be intrusted in such a solemn manner, both body and soul. Mr. Evelyn seemed exhausted, at the conclusion, and all left the room, after a parting shake of the hand, with the exception of Beatrice and also Mrs. Moore, who remained to watch with her.

It was nearly eight o'clock ; Mr. Evelyn fell into a doze, and perfect silence reigned through the room. Beatrice rose, when she saw he was asleep, and walked to the window. It was open, for the night was very warm, and as she leaned her head out, the fresh land-breeze played on her hot cheeks. The odor of the flowers came up sweetly from the garden below ; the fire-flies were dancing about among the trees, and the saw-beetle was humming its monotonous drone. A few stars were appearing, and everything seemed to agree, in its calmness and quiet, with the death-bed of a Christian. Solemn thoughts of eternity filled Beatrice's mind, and she stood, resting her head on her hand, in a kind of mournful enjoyment. Once she raised her head, startled, fancying she heard the sound of falling rain, but it was only the wind rustling the dry branches of the cocoa-nut trees.

After the lapse of about half an hour, Mrs. Moore came and gently tapped her on the shoulder.

"Your Papa is awake, Missy, and he seemed to look round for you ; do go to him. And do you not think I had better light a candle, Missy ?"

"Yes, Mrs. Moore, do ; but do not place it too near—the light might annoy him."

Beatrice walked up to the bed, and took her father's hand. He pressed it slightly, and smiled at her, and said : "I have no pain, love ; Jesus is with

me. He makes my dying bed easy. Dear Lord, I come to Thee!"

After speaking at intervals for a short time, he seemed to doze again.

"Mrs. Moore," said Beatrice, "how clear and bright all is with him! May we find it so at our last hour."

"It is indeed, Missy; 'the Lord comforteth the souls of his saints;' and he has promised to be with them in the dark valley."

Madame de Tremonille stole softly in, several times, to comfort Beatrice; once she brought her, with her own hands, a cup of tea, and made her drink it; and again she came and remained, while Mrs. Moore went out of the room to have her supper, that Beatrice might not be left alone in case of Mr. Evelyn's sudden departure.

At eleven o'clock, he again awoke. "My Bee, read to me about Christian going over the river."

Beatrice understood him, and fetching a small edition of the Pilgrim's Progress, which lay on his dressing-table, she turned to the passage and read it in a low, clear voice.

"Thank you, love, I am nearly in the river; I feel as though my feet were touching its waters. Dear Saviour, receive me!"

Widow Moore raised the quilt and put her hand on his feet. They were icy cold. She beckoned to

Beatrice, and whispered: "He'll not be kept long waiting now, Missy."

Mr. Evelyn seemed to lie in a dreamy state for some minutes. Presently he spoke again: "I see them! I see the shining ones!" he said, faintly, "and my Mary is among them." He spoke no more, and about half past two o'clock, with a gentle sigh, he breathed his last! Widow Moore made a sign to Beatrice that all was over—they sank on their knees in prayer—no word was spoken—they were alone with the dead!

In a short time, Mrs. Moore rose and said to Beatrice:

"Missy, you had better go now; I have some things to attend to here, and you must try and get some sleep."

Beatrice shook her head, but went out.

She walked along the passage to Madame de Tremonille's room, and knocking at the door, found her awake.

"Is that you, dear Beatrice?" she said; "I have been several times to the door to listen if I could hear your father's voice—but all was so still."

"He is gone!" said Beatrice; "we shall never more hear his voice. Oh! Papa!"

"He is at rest," said Madame de Tremonille. "Come, dear, and lie down by me."

Beatrice could say no more—her heart was too full to speak—and putting her arm round her friend, she lay down by her side, and wearied, with fatigue and watching, she fell toward morning into a troubled doze.

“No voice in the chamber,
No sound in the hall;
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.”—LONGFELLOW.

CHAPTER VII.

“ We will be patient and assuage the feeling,
We may not wholly stay—
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have sway.”—LONGFELLOW.

AT sunset the following day, the little funeral procession moved from Palm Hill, bearing Mr. Evelyn's earthly remains to their last resting-place. He was laid in the burial-ground of the little Scotch church; and Mr. Campbell gave a touching and solemn address to the mourners, among whom were Mr. Gisborne, and Dr. Mason, and all Madame de Tremonille's servants. Beatrice did not go—she had no mourning prepared; and, beside, she was afraid, lest, by not being able to control her feelings, she might disturb the solemnity of the scene. She remained alone in her room, engaged in prayer.

The party dispersed after the funeral. Tea was set in the veranda, and Madame de Tremonille and Blanche sat there, quietly chatting together in the twilight. There was a sadness over little Blanche's spirits, visible in the unusual quietness of her

demeanor. She brought a little stool, and placing it at her aunt's feet, she laid her head in her lap. Madame de Tremonille stroked her soft curls, and kissed her fondly; but Blanche lay still, looking out into the garden. "Mamma," she said, "do people, when they are dead, know what happens on earth? Do dear Papa and Uncle Eugene know anything about us?"

"My darling, I fully believe it. I believe the spirits of those we love, are often near us. You know the spirit, Blanche, means that part of us which thinks and feels, but which we cannot see; it is our *real selves*—for our bodies, you know, are only called 'tabernacles,' that is, tents or coverings, for our spirits to dwell in. At the last day, our spirits will have tabernacles again, only they will be bright and beautiful ones—not full of sickness and pain, as these bodies are. Do you understand me, darling?"

"Yes, Mamma, I think I do; but what do you mean when you say, a spirit is in heaven? A spirit cannot wear white robes, and play on a golden harp?"

"Well, dear, we are not given to understand perfectly the state of the soul after death; but in some way or other, the souls of believers are certainly perfectly happy, and with God. I think that description of the white robes, and the palms, and the

mansions in the heavenly city, must all refer to what will take place after the judgment day."

"Mamma, it is so wonderful to think of our lasting forever!"

"It is indeed, my child; the idea of Eternity is beyond what our minds can grasp. It has been illustrated in a most forcible manner, by an old writer. He says: 'Suppose a bird were to undertake to remove this whole earth to some other place, and this bird were but able to carry one single grain at a time, and that it should take her a thousand years to fly to the place where she had to deposit it,—that when all this earth, with its mountains and valleys, and plains, should have been removed in this manner, we should still be as far from the end of eternity as we were before the bird began to carry a single grain.' This is the idea he expresses, though they are not the exact words."

"Mamma, it is almost too wonderful! I wonder that knowing this, does not make people think of their souls more."

"My dear child, people know many things without believing them; that is, without applying that knowledge practically to themselves. They seem to go on, living in a kind of dream, believing in their *head*, that the Bible is true, but their *heart* is untouched by it, and they wake up to see their folly when it is too late."

"Mamma, we ought to try and wake up as many people as we can, ought we not?"

"Yes! indeed, my darling; may God give us strength to do so—but now I think I will go and see if dear Beatrice will join us; poor girl, she must feel so lonely. We must try and make her as happy as we can, while she is with us, Blanche."

"I think I will run out, before it is too dark, and get her some flowers," said Blanche—"they often do me good when I feel sorry." She tripped lightly out, and Madame de Tremonille looked fondly after her, as the little white figure disappeared among the trees, round the corner of the garden.

There was something too holy and happy about her father's death, for it to be in accordance with Beatrice's feelings to yield to any violent or exclusive grief. She felt his loss much, it is true, but yet she felt much calmer than even she herself had anticipated. An hour's communion with God, had made the things of time, earthly sorrows and cares, seem as very light, compared with the "glory that shall be revealed." And it was with a heart nerved to do her duty calmly and trustfully, and with a countenance serene, though not joyful, that she walked to meet Madame de Tremonille, when the latter entered her room.

"Dear Beatrice!" said her friend, gently kissing her; "do you think you could come and take tea,

quietly, with little Blanche and me?—we should be very glad if you would come, but please yourself about it.”

“I will come!” said Beatrice; “I should like it, dear Isabelle. Come, let us go!”

“Where is Blanche?” continued she, as they reached the veranda.

“She will be here in a minute; she ran into the garden just now,” was the reply.

In two or three minutes, a light footstep was heard stealing softly in; it was now so dark they could scarcely see one another’s face. Blanche threw her arms round Beatrice’s neck, and said—“I have been to fetch you something to do you good, dear Beatrice—smell these flowers!”

“Thank you very much, darling, they are just what I like!”

“Blanche! run and tell Pomio to bring candles here,” said her aunt, “or else it will not be possible for me to pour out the tea.”

Candles were brought, and with their coming, they had to close the jalousies and door of the veranda, or otherwise the entrance of the light would be a signal for the invasion of such a swarm of moths, musquitoes, and insects of all kinds, as effectually to interrupt conversation.

After they had seated themselves at the tea-table, Madame de Tremonille said, in a gentle and almost

hesitating voice—"I can go early, to-morrow morning, into the town, and get such things as you may require for your mourning, if you wish me to do so, dear Beatrice. I was thinking that, perhaps, you might not wish to go yourself, and you can tell me just what you want."

Beatrice understood her kind consideration, and felt grateful for it. "Thank you!" she replied, "I should be very glad to have it as soon as possible, and I think I had rather stay quietly here at home a little while; beside," she added, "I feel I must make up my mind to write home and tell them all of—of—"

She could not finish the sentence, and laying her head down on her hands, her frame, for a few minutes, shook with convulsive grief.

"Dear Beatrice!" said Madame de Tremonille, softly, after a pause—"had you rather I should write?"

"No! thank you," was the reply; "I think I will write to Walter, and let him break it to dear Hetty and Aunt Louisa."

"How soon do you think you might expect an answer from them?"

"In about five or six weeks, I should think."

It was then arranged that widow Moore's daughter-in-law, Lucy, should come to the house for a few days to assist in making the mourning, and after

some further conversation, the servants were summoned to prayers, and the whole family retired for the night. Beatrice's sojourn at Palm Hill, while awaiting a letter from New York, was made as pleasant as possible to her by all her friends. Madame de Tremonille's kindness was unceasing; she was not, indeed, one of those who would seek to banish the loss of a dear friend from the mind, by a round of amusements—her good feeling, and her own deep and recent loss, forbade this,—but she had so many useful plans afloat, and had so much life and energy, that Beatrice was always interested and occupied, and that did much to prevent brooding over trouble. Among other things, Beatrice began to teach little Nelly, Pomio's daughter, to read —telling Blanche that she should leave her under her charge when she returned to America. Nelly was an apt pupil, but rather inclined to be lazy; she had also an invincible propensity for lying—a habit but too common among the negro children in the West Indies. She always appeared to say that which she thought would please the person addressing her, without any regard at all to the truth of what she was saying. One day Madame de Tremonille sent her to Mr. Campbell's house with a message, and on her return, she described what the minister was doing, and entered so minutely into particulars as to say, that she found the garden-gate open. Now it appeared

afterward that this message was never delivered at all, that the child had never been near the house, having gone off to play in another direction, and yet she never hesitated at all in her story. Poor Nelly! her moral sense seemed exceedingly deadened, and Beatrice scarcely knew what to do with her. She was an affectionate little thing, though, after all. Her features, for a negro, were not at all unpleasant; she had very bright sparkling eyes, and seemed invariably to dress in the brightest of pink calicoes, with handkerchiefs of every variety of hue tied round her head, below which used to escape little plaited ends of frizzled hair, tied with any string that could be got hold of. Some of Nelly's ideas were very primitive. One day when Beatrice was teaching her her lessons, she said to her:

“Missy, one woman tell me, to-day, dat de sun nebber shine in England, where Missis come from, (pointing to Madame de Tremonille, who was working in the room,) and dat when dey wash clothes, dey have to dry 'em by the fire! Ha, ha!” and Nelly chuckled at the idea of the barbarous country.

Beatrice and Madame de Tremonille laughed,—the latter said: “Well, Nelly, I can tell you that the sun does shine there, and very brightly too; but there is a time of the year, called Winter, when it is cold and wet, and the sun is not so hot, and then

people do really sometimes have to dry clothes by the fire.”*

“Well, come, Nelly, if you are satisfied, let us go on reading,” said Beatrice.

Mr. Campbell often came over from the Manse to spend a quiet evening with them: he was such a superior young man that his company was always a source of pleasure and gratification. He got Beatrice to interest herself in several of his plans for good, among his people, and asked her to take a class in his school. One evening, about sunset, Madame de Tremonille sent Nelly to ask him to come over and take tea with them. Nelly returned to say, that Mr. Campbell was with old Joe Ward, but that his servant said, she would tell him when he came in.

“How long old Ward lingers,” said Beatrice.

“Yes, indeed,” said Madame de Tremonille; “but I heard this afternoon, from Lucy, that he seemed very low to-day, and that she thought he could not last long.”

“It will be a ‘happy release,’ in the true sense of the word,” said Beatrice.

“You may well say, in the true sense of the word; it often pains me to hear persons thoughtlessly apply the sentence, when speaking of the death

* Nelly’s character is drawn from that of a little negro servant of the author.

of those to whom their departure from the body must be anything but a happy release—of those whose happiness lay in this world, and this world only. But in old Joe's case we have had evidence that his treasure is above."

Just that minute there came a gentle knock at the door, and Mr. Campbell entered. After shaking hands with Madame de Tremonille and Beatrice, he said: "I have just come from a happy death-bed—old Joe is at rest. His little grand-daughter came to tell me, about half an hour ago, that he seemed very near his end, and that Mrs. Moore, who was with him, wished me to come up. I had not been ten minutes in the house before he breathed his last. His senses seemed quite clear to the end, and he spoke to me several times.

"Massa Campbell," said he, when I came in, "I'm gwine, at last, to my Saviour! Oh! dear Jesus I'm berry happy to come to Thee." Again, he said, after a pause of two or three minutes, "Massa Campbell, will you bury me underneath dem large trees on de side of de hill, where I used to go fur to seek de Lord? I should like to lie dere."

I assured him it should be as he wished. The trees, I believe, are on Mr. Gisborne's estate, but I have no doubt I shall be able to arrange the matter with him. A little while before he died he said: "Tell Miss Evelyn, the young lady at the hill,

that I'm gwine to see her dear father, and help him to sing praises—yes! help-him—help-him—oh! that will be joyful! joyful! joyful”—and giving a sort of sigh of satisfaction, his freed spirit was away.

The tears stood in Beatrice's eyes at this reference to her father. Mr. Campbell rose and walked to the window.

“O! do just look at your little Blanche, Madame de Tremonille,” said he, “how hard she is working at cleaning that flower-bed; and she seems to have imbued Nelly with her own energetic spirit too, for a time; look at her carrying backward and forward the watering pans of water for the plants.”

Madame de Tremonille rose and looked out. Blanche was kneeling on a piece of old matting, with her white frock carefully pinned up behind, rooting away among the weeds with an old knife, with all her might—occasionally stopping to direct Nelly's energies in the way of watering.

“Suppose we go and look at the little gardener,” said Madame de Tremonille; “the evening is delightful now.”

“Well done, Blanche,” said Mr. Campbell, as they approached; “if you want to keep your aunt's garden all in such pattern neatness as that plot, I think you will have to get me to help you—the weeds grow so very fast here, almost like Jack's bean-stalk.”

Blanche started, and then laughed merrily at being surprised—"thank you, Mr. Campbell," she said, "when I have anything very hard to do, I will send for you; but, you know, this piece is my own garden, that mamma gave me to take care of, and keep for myself—the worst of it is," she continued, sighing—"I cannot keep those tiresome chickens from coming in, and scratching up the ground, and spoiling the looks of it."

"Well now, what can be done?" said Mr. Campbell, kindly—"I have it. You see, Blanche, this garden of yours, is a large piece, and those trees at the back of it, with the wall behind, protect it well there—now do you not think, that you and I could manage to put up a nice little paling all round it, and a little gate in front? Eh! what do you think of that plan? and then you might clip your chickens' wings, so that they could not fly over, without hurting them at all—"

"Well, that would be a very nice plan, said Blanche thoughtfully, but how could I get at the bed, to tidy it, if the paling were in the way?"

"Well," said Mr. Campbell, "if your aunt will give us leave, we will inclose a slip of the lawn inside the paling, so as to leave room for you to walk round your garden, and we can make a nice little path right up the middle."

“O! thank you,” said Blanche, clapping her hands, “that will be charming—when will you come and begin?”

“Well, to-morrow evening, perhaps, if I am not very busy; if I can, I will come for a little time in the cool of the morning—only you must promise to be up to help me—”

“Indeed I will, said Blanche, I always get up very, very early.”

“I have been getting some trellis-work made, to put over the porch, at the Manse,” said Mr. Campbell, “and some of the pieces of lath which are left, will do capitally for our paling.”

“Well, we will leave you to your weeding now, Blanche,” said her aunt, “let us all go, and take a walk down the road, Mr. Campbell; the evening is too pleasant to go in-doors, yet.”

“I suppose, you intend training creepers over your trellis-work, Mr. Campbell,” said Beatrice—

“Yes,” said he, “I do so love to see, what is beautiful around me; I think, as far as we can, we should surround our homes with the lovely and simple objects of nature. I often think that the appearance of a man’s house and garden, is a sort of index to his mind and character.”

“Indeed, it is,” said Madame de Tremonille, “I often think, too, that without allowing our minds to become at all absorbed by the luxuries and

pleasures of this life, we should be feelingly alive to the perception of whatever is beautiful. Whatever is beautiful is good ; that is, the beauty in the object, is a sort of glimpse of perfection—a revelation, a foreshadowing from above—whether it is a beautiful landscape, or a lovely face, or even a picture or statue, or any other work of art. “I remember reading, I think it was in Lord Lindsay’s ‘Christian Art,’” said Mr. Campbell, in reference to some of the old masters—some of the finest painters the world has ever produced—“that before they began to paint a picture, they would kneel down and pray to God, to inspire their efforts—to help them to form just conceptions of their subjects, which were mostly taken from sacred history. Now how many of their pictures seem to raise and exalt the mind, when gazing at them. Look at Titian’s ‘Last Supper,’ or Michael Angelo’s ‘Judgment,’ or some of Carlo Dolci’s exquisite heads of Christ, and many others.”

“I remember,” said Madame de Tremonille, “the intense delight I experienced, when my parents took me, while we were staying in London, previous to our sailing for this country, to see several of the best collections both of pictures and statuary. To gaze thus on the embodied conceptions of loveliness, produced by the noblest souls, seemed to raise my mind to a sort of rapture of sympathy, if I may so say—”

“And yet, in some of these pictures, we see depicted some of the most disgusting legends of the Romish Church,” said Mr. Campbell; “look at the marriage of St. Catharine, for instance—that is quite blasphemous, I think.”

“That is very true,” replied Madame de Tremonille, “in many other instances. I confess, I have felt displeased myself, when looking at some of the pictures of the Virgin and Child; in those especially, where the Saviour is made a subordinate object.

“And yet,” said Beatrice, “the simple idea of the Virgin Mary, as the Mother of Jesus, and of his being a little helpless infant, in her lap, is so beautiful, that I do not wonder at its having been chosen as a subject for painting some of the Madonnas; Raphael’s especially seem, from the prints I have seen from his pictures, to be represented as lost in love and adoration for the holy Infant,—which is as it should be. Look at the ‘*Vierge de la Chaise*,’ for instance, where the attention both of the Virgin and the young John the Baptist, seems entirely centered in the Divine Child.”

“That is true,” said Madame de Tremonille, “I think we should try and admire whatever is good and beautiful in every picture, and condemn all that is erroneous and discordant—if our minds are true and right toward God, we shall be enabled readily to discern what is of Him, and what is not.”

“You are very right,” replied Mr. Campbell; “I remember that, when reading the book I referred to, (Lord Lindsay’s Christian Art,) I saw that some—indeed, I may say very many—of the legends which furnished subjects for pictures, consisted of fabulous stories invented by the Romish priests, and which were calculated to do a great deal of harm. Some of them, however, contained ideas of much beauty. I remember, now we speak of it, one of them, which mentions Mary Magdalene as having existed, after the death of our Lord, in a state of such holiness and happy calm of soul, that she was filled with love to God in such a degree, that it served her both for meat and drink, and she retired, sustained by that alone, to a desert place, to hold communion with her risen Lord. The idea struck me as a pretty one, and I remember versifying it, during a leisure hour, while I was a student.”

“Could you remember the words, Mr. Campbell?” said Beatrice.

“I think I can. I will repeat them to you, if you will listen so long:

“She shone in the desert, a form of light,
That maid rob’d in vesture of purest white;
In the wide sandy waste, in the sulphurous air,
How might one so beautiful harbor there?”

“The fierce summer-sun, in its noontide blaze,
Only poured all around her its softest rays;

Which lingered and glanced, as if fain to tell,
They ne'er should meet aught they could love so well.

"Not a palm-tree waved 'gainst the lurid sky,
Save the cluster that grew o'er her, dark and high,
Not a single green leaflet its nurture found,
Not a gurgling brook laved the thirsty ground:

"Yet, in calm peace, she rested, nor faded away,
As beauteous at eve as at breaking of day;
And the meat she was fed with, was heavenly love,
Tuned softly from gold harps of angels above.

"And every morn, at the sun's rising hour,
Lest her spirit should faint 'neath its fierce noontide power,
Lo! a group of bright messengers bore her on high,
And a seraph's spread wing was her canopy.

"In the shadowy region where mystery has birth,
Where it scarcely seems heaven, yet oh! 't is not earth;
She listened, entranced, to that ravishing strain,
And her spirit's love bloomed into brightness again.

"So again, when the sun, 'neath yon broad line of sand,
Had left to cool shadows the thirsty land;
And pillowed on ether the soft clouds lay,
Or stretched into nothingness far away:

"O! how her blest hours all in rapture flew by,
With a heart tuned to praise, and her God ever nigh;
What to her were the sun's beams or shadows of night,
With a spirit thrilled through with ecstatic delight!

"And ever anon her tranced lips moved slow,
As if conning some melody sweet and low;
Which was tuned to her ear by the spirits on high,
In strains of divinest harmony.

"Thank you," said Madame de Tremonille, "I like that idea of calm, contemplative love. It seems to give one some faint conception of the state of the glorified body after the resurrection. I suppose the sensations of rapture will be such that a thousand years will be as one day."

"I remember," replied Mr. Campbell, "seeing that thought beautifully illustrated in a poem by Trench, called, I think, 'The Monk and the Bird.' He represents the Monk as doubting the possibility of perfect happiness in a future state, without some variety of employment. Walking, one day, in a wood, God causes him to hear a bird singing such ravishing notes that he is spell-bound, and when he returns home to his brother-monks, he finds that he has been years absent—that they have become old men while he was listening to the exquisite song, so lost in admiration as not to perceive the flight of time. I cannot remember the verses, but this is the sense of them."

"I think," said Beatrice, "that although it would not, of course, be right for us to retire entirely from the world and give ourselves up to contemplation and prayer, as God has given each of us a duty to perform in this life; yet still, a near approach to this feeling of which you have been speaking, is sometimes attained by experienced Christians when engaged in prayer. I remember a nurse we had,

when I was a child, who used often to become so lost in prayer as to be entirely unconscious of any outward objects — her thoughts would seem to rise, she would say, ‘right up to heaven.’ She remained with us till I was about fifteen, and able to converse with her on such subjects. After she left us, she went to live in a small house not very far from ours, with a brother who was a widower, and I used often to go and see her. She fell into bad health, after a time, and about three years ago she died. I remember, one day, saying to her, ‘How glad you will be, Nurse, to see the Saviour you have loved so long!’ She said, impressively: ‘Miss Beatrice, I *have* seen my Saviour several times. Sometimes I have seemed to get so near to Him that He has given me a glimpse of himself. Yes, I feel I have seen Him.’ Now, I dare not call this imagination or enthusiasm.”

“I think you are right,” said Mr. Campbell, thoughtfully; “it is certain that the nearer a Christian lives to God, the clearer is the revelation he gives of himself.”

“I am afraid we must be going in now,” said Madame de Tremonille; “the dew is falling quite heavily.”

“Mr. Campbell,” said Beatrice, as they entered the house, “who is to take charge of old Ward’s grandchild—she seems left quite without friends?”

“Well, she seems to have found one in widow Moore,” was the reply; “she says, she will take care of the little thing, to keep it out of harm’s way, and Lucy says, she shall be glad to have her to take charge of her baby while she is sewing. I believe she is a good needle-woman, and might earn a good deal that way.”

“She is,” said Beatrice; “but I must run into the garden and call Blanche,—that child will catch cold in her enthusiasm for gardening.”

The rest of the evening was spent in pleasant conversation, enlivened with music, by both Madame de Tremonille and Beatrice. The piano at Palm Hill had been hired from a Jew dealer in the town, who kept a tolerable supply—most of his stock being purchased from merchants and others leaving the island. It was a tolerably good one, and both our friends had sweet voices, and sang duets together delightfully. Blanche was learning to play, Beatrice being her music-mistress for the present, as she insisted on taking the drudgery of teaching the rudiments off Madame de Tremonille’s hands. Beatrice had brought a small supply of new music with her from New York, and this she gladly added to her friend’s stock, knowing that it is difficult to procure good new music in the West Indies.

When Mr. Campbell spent the evening at Palm Hill he always read prayers to the household, who

were all much attached to him—indeed, so were all his people—and scarcely a day passed by without some of the negroes coming to his house with an offering of a fowl, some honey, or yams, or some other trifle for “good Massa Campbell.”

The next morning, while Madame de Tremonille and Beatrice were sitting quietly at work in the drawing-room, chatting together, with little Blanche learning her lessons in her favorite nook, in the window, they heard the sound of carriage-wheels coming up the hill, and presently Pomio ushered in Mary and Caroline Gisborne. They were lively, voluble girls, with plenty of fun and conversation.

“My dear girls,” said Madame de Tremonille, “how could you think of coming out in this hot sun, at this time of day, in that open phaeton? why you will quite spoil your English complexions.”

“O! I don’t think there’s much of them left already,” said Caroline, laughing; “there’s Mary there, as brown as a berry; she always persists in rushing about the garden at home, without any bonnet.”

“Rushing about the garden, Caroline! why, what nonsense you talk,” said Mary, who had established herself on the sofa by Beatrice’s side, and had thrown off her bonnet; “I only run across to the kitchen sometimes, to give directions to old Sally, or, perhaps, to the coop, to feed my chickens;

and it is not worth while to dress one's self for that."

"Well, I have been longer in the country than you have," said Madame de Tremonille, "and I really advise you to be careful, Mary. I knew a gentleman, a friend of my father's, who had a sun-stroke from incautiously exposing himself to the heat, and he has been weak in his mind ever since."

"Dear me," said Caroline, laughing, "that will quite account for some of your vagaries of late, Mary; you had better take care or you will become quite crazy."

"Caroline! how can you be so absurd. I am quite as sane as yourself," rejoined her sister.

"How delightfully cool and pleasant it is up here," said Caroline; "there seems much more air than there is at Shady Grove, and you have such a pretty peep at the sea, too, from this window. It looks so bright and sparkling I sometimes long for a dip. Don't you remember the fun we used to have with the old bathing-women at Hastings, Mary?"

"I know of a delightful place for bathing, about a mile and a half from here," said Madame de Tremonille. "My father's church was in that direction, and in the course of my explorations, before I was married, I discovered the place, and often bathed there myself."

“How can there be any place for bathing only a mile and a half from here?” said Beatrice, “I thought we were three miles from the sea.”

“So we are, in the direction of the town; but if you follow a steepish path down the road immediately behind this house, you will see a place where the land treads in considerably, forming a small bay, and the sea is here generally delightfully smooth, and the shore is protected by high rocks.”

“O! I’m sure the thing might be managed,” said Mary, gleefully, “if we started by five in the morning, do not you, dear Beatrice? and you know, Caroline and I could come up from Shady Grove on our ponies, and then take them with us to help the tired ones of the party.”

“Yes! and we will take Nelly with us to help to carry the bathing accouterments,” said Madame de Tremonille. So it was arranged, and after chatting some time and taking lunch at Palm Hill, Caroline and Mary left, promising to be there punctually at five the following morning.

“O! the luxuriant freshness of a morning in the tropics!” thought Beatrice, as she rose and looked out of her window just as the gray dawn was breaking next day—there was such a delightful fragrance in the air—such a dewy calm, that it filled her with delight. She made, however, a hasty toilette, for she had heard the sound of ponies’ feet trotting up

the avenue some minutes before, and on passing through into the veranda, she found Caroline and Mary awaiting her.

“Well! Beatrice, isn’t this delightful?” said Caroline, enthusiastically; “you see we have come quite in dishabille; these cotton wrappers are capital, are they not?”

“Just the thing,” said Beatrice; “I suppose we are not likely to meet any one, and I am going to take my old American sun-bonnet, it will be so nice to cover my wet hair as we are coming home.”

Just then Madame de Tremonille joined them, and after wishing all the party good morning, she said—“I have enlisted Jeannette’s services also, for we shall want some one to stand at the entrance of the path to prevent intruders. O! here she comes with Blanche and Nelly.”

The road to the shore was soon traversed; being all down hill, it was easy work, and when they arrived at the spot, many were the exclamations of delight and rapture which burst from all lips. A low fringe of trees skirted the shore, effectually screening it from the road. Through these a narrow foot-path had been made; the rocks were uneven, gradually shelving toward the water, which rippled clear and sparkling at their feet. In one place there were natural stepping-stones, forming an easy means of descent, and the water for some twenty yards out,

was only four or five feet deep, and clear white sand sparkled at the bottom. It was the beau-ideal of a place for bathing, and there were screams of delight from Mary and Caroline. The sun had not yet risen and it was delightfully cool, and very soon there was a merry party splashing about in the water. Blanche remained under Madame de Tremonille's care, glad, indeed, to do so, being somewhat afraid of going out of her depth.

After they had been in a few minutes, Nelly, who was sitting on the rocks with their clothes, called out in a plaintive voice—"Missy Beatrice, may I come in de water?"

"Well! Nelly, perhaps you had better stay till Jeannette is at liberty, and then you can bathe together."

"Oh! Missy, let me stay in all de time, while she bathe and while you bathe, me can swim like fish, Missy."

"Well! then, come on!" and presently Nelly's little dark form was seen to plunge fearlessly off the point of a rock into some rather deep water which lay on the other side.

"Take care, take care, Nelly!" called Blanche, but the little thing was splashing about in great glee, and now came swimming quickly toward the party, using that peculiar paddling motion common among the negro children. She soon ventured out to sea

for a considerable distance, and the rest of the party forgot her for a time.

They were amusing themselves by trying to float and swim, when on a sudden Caroline Gisborne uttered an exclamation in a tone of horror, and stood upright in the water; her companions looked at her in amazement, and saw her turn very white and point with her finger out to sea. Above the crest of a wave was to be seen a dark object, slowly approaching the shore—it was the fin of an enormous shark. “Where is Nelly?” cried all voices; “Nelly! Nelly! child, swim for your life!” But the poor child, though she heard them, and was several yards nearer the shore than the monster, could not move a muscle, so paralyzed was she by terror at the sight of the shark. They saw it approach her, and then rose one long fearful scream from the water, and with a cry of horror, the rest of the party fled hastily to the rocks for safety, though in truth, the water where they were was too shallow for the shark to approach them. Pale and terrified they stood on the rocks, and gazed toward the sea; the water that came rippling up toward them so calmly and gently was tinged with blood—poor Nelly’s blood!—but no further trace of her appeared, and shuddering with horror, they all hastily began to dress.

“How *shall* we tell Pomio,” said Madame de Tremonille; “poor fellow, he will be so shocked!”

"Has he a mother living?" said Mary Gisborne.

"No; Pomio's wife was cook in our house, and she died about three years ago; and the poor man seemed so fond of this little one."

"Dear me! to think that this should have been the end of our excursion, from which we promised ourselves so much pleasure," said Caroline, sighing. "How horrible! poor little thing! I feel as if I should never forget that scream!"

"It is indeed, dreadful," said Madame de Tremonille, "but there is really no danger in bathing here, for any one who does not venture out to sea; and I believe, indeed, that it is a rare thing for a shark to approach so near shore, as that monster did to-day."

Jeannette had rushed forward to the rocks, when she heard the scream, and Madame de Tremonille now placed Blanche on one of the ponies, which had been tied outside; and bidding her lead it by the bridle, she herself mounted the other, at the urgent request of the rest of the party, and the whole cavalcade set sorrowfully forward. It seemed, too, as if the appearance of the morning had changed with their feelings: dark, gloomy clouds hung about the horizon, and though the sun had some time since risen, his rays were scarcely visible.

A low rumbling sound, as of distant thunder, was

heard, and there seemed a kind of stifling stillness in the air.

“I think we had better make haste home,” said Beatrice; “look, Isabelle, how dark the clouds are, it feels to me very like a storm—”

“Yes, indeed,” said Madame de Tremonille, “we must not delay at all, these tropical showers come on so suddenly.”

The three girls quickened their pace, but none of them seemed inclined for much conversation. A little while before they reached their destination, when within two hundred yards of Palm Hill, they all became aware of a most unpleasant sensation. They were moving thoughtfully along, when all simultaneously experienced a feeling akin to sea-sickness, and looking at each other, and the surrounding objects, they saw the trees bowing, as it were, toward them, and a neighboring cottage shaking. The ponies stopped, snorted, and trembled violently in every joint.

“Do not be alarmed,” said Madame de Tremonille, “it is only a slight shock of an earthquake—the principal force of which, has doubtless spent itself in some neighboring island. But Beatrice, dear, what is the matter? why how pale you look!”

“Oh! I only feel a little dizzy and faint,” was the reply; but before Mary and Caroline, who were

behind, could catch her, Beatrice sank fainting on the ground.

“Jeannette,” said Madame de Tremonille, calmly, “run into that cottage and get some water as quickly as you can ; see, there is the woman herself, at the fence, frightened out of her house, I suppose, poor creature. Beatrice will be better directly, Mary ; it is a common thing for persons to feel in this way, after the uncomfortable sensation of an earthquake ; I remember once, when I was in the town, seeing several persons faint in the streets, on a similar occasion.”

“Dear me ! this does seem a morning of disasters !” said Caroline.

Beatrice soon revived, but she appeared weak, and was glad to accept a seat on the pony’s back, and lie down, as soon as they reached the house.

Poor Pomio was greatly affected at the loss of Nelly, and vowed vengeance against the shark ; and for several days after, the poor man might be seen sitting on the rocks for hours together, with an old double-barreled gun, watching an opportunity of putting a bullet in the monster—but it never seemed to venture near enough to the shore again for him to get a sight of it.

It was two or three days before the party at Palm Hill could recover their usual serenity, or help thinking of poor little Nelly’s fate. The usual routine of quiet occupation was followed, and nothing par-

ticular occurred for several days. Little Blanche's garden had been inclosed by a neat paling, under the joint efforts of herself and Mr. Campbell, and Beatrice had taken several pleasant rambles with Madame de Tremonille. In these walks, Walter Grey often furnished the topic of conversation. Beatrice longed, she scarcely could say how anxiously, for an answer to her letter, and it was now fast approaching the time when she might expect to hear. Often, when a ship appeared on the horizon, would she gaze anxiously through a telescope, to see if the "stars and stripes" floated from her mast-head. It is anxious work waiting, and she found it so. Not that she was unhappy at Palm Hill. She loved Madame de Tremonille and Blanche too tenderly for that, and they did all in their power to make her happy; but her heart's warmest affections turned naturally toward the husband of her choice.

Meanwhile, she occupied herself as much as possible, and that made the time seem to pass more quickly, and she had many sources of interest around her. She amused herself with increasing her collection of curiosities, and with watching the habits and manners of the natives, which interested her from their novelty. It was droll to see strings of the negroes descending the hills to the market-town, driving before them ponies and mules laden with large panniers full of fruit and vegetables,

while they themselves followed on foot, carrying enormous loads of produce, of every kind, on their heads. The women wore short cotton gowns, which they made still shorter by tying a handkerchief round them a little below the waist, and hitching them up—a fashion which certainly added no elegance to their appearance—while their sturdy black legs and feet were bare, though there were generally shoes in their bundle, to be put on when they reached the town. Often some of them would turn aside, with fruit and vegetables, and bring them up to Palm Hill for sale. But beside these market-people, a black woman of the name of Simpson used to come to Madame de Tremonille's almost every day, with ~~baskets~~ of produce of all kinds. The fruits of the country seemed very strange, at first, to Beatrice, and, with the exception of the orange, she thought them greatly inferior to those of home. There were abicado-pears, melons, pine-apples, guavas, mammy-apples, and many others. Mrs. Simpson was quite a character, and it was amusing to see the leisurely way in which she would spread out her goods on the veranda, and sit and chat about the merits of each. She was very black and very plain, with six or seven very black and very plain little daughters—one or two of whom generally accompanied her. These children rejoiced in the finest names possible—there were Victoria, Georgi-

ana, and Wilhelmina, and a host of others. Mrs. Simpson seemed to think herself a person of great importance, and one day, after she had finished her sale, and was passing along outside the house, Beatrice and Madame de Tremonille were much amused by hearing the following conversation. A carpenter, who was making some repairs outside, called out to her: "I say, good woman, how do you sell your oranges?"

"*Woman*, indeed! *Woman! woman!*" was the reply, in tones of increasing anger. "Hi! me know me not *man*, sah! but me *lady*, sah! Dat buckra man no gentleman for true!"

Madame de Tremonille told Beatrice that some of these women bring up their daughters in a very idle, bad way, particularly if they should be at all light-colored, not allowing them to perform any kind of menial office, but doing all the drudgery themselves. She said, that a little while before, a friend of hers in town had sent for a rather pretty mulatto girl, who was a dressmaker, and after taking her pattern and receiving the dress to take home, the young lady said "she would desire her mother to call for the parcel in the evening, as she could not think of carrying it through the streets herself!"

CHAPTER VIII.

“I love him—I trust in him,
He trusteth me alway ;
And so the time flies hopefully,
Although he's far away.”—BARRY CORNWALL.

“Let me not, to the marriage of true minds,
Admit impediment ——.” SHAKESPEARE.

LATE one afternoon, Madame de Tremonille dispatched Pomio on horseback to the town, to procure several articles required in the house, and told him to be sure and call at the post-office, to see if there was a letter for Beatrice—an American ship having been seen to enter the harbor that morning. Beatrice awaited Pomio's return with the greatest anxiety; and when it became time to expect him, she could sit still no longer, but stationed herself in the porch, and stood looking down the avenue in a state of nervous suspense. In a short time, (though it seemed long to her,) he was seen trotting up the hill, and Beatrice caught up her sun-bonnet, and ran out to meet him.

“Any letter for me, Pomio?” inquired she, breathlessly.

"Yes, Missy, a big letter from 'Meriky." And Pomio pulled forth the long-looked for treasure from the bottom of his basket, carefully wrapped up in paper, and handed it to Beatrice.

"Thank God! it is from Walter," she exclaimed; and tears of joy started to her eyes, and she ran into the house, and on to her own room, that she might read it undisturbed. Her hands trembled as she broke the seal. It ran thus—

"New York, ———— ————.

"MY VERY DEAR BEATRICE:—

"I need not tell you, I am sure, with what feelings of deep grief we received the tidings of your dear father's death; and I am sure you will know how much I myself sorrowed on your own account. My dear, dear Beatrice, how desolate you must have felt, being so far from home at such a sad time,—and yet, I thank God, that He seems to have raised up kind friends for you in that distant land, in your hour of trial. How joyful and thankful too, we may both feel at the triumphant and happy end of our dear father—for may I not call him mine, too, as he promised us to each other? Your dear sister Hetty was very much afflicted when I broke to her the sad intelligence. Poor child! she seemed so bitterly to regret not having been with you. Your aunt, too, seemed to feel it a good deal, and I think

the tidings were quite unexpected by both of them; they said your letters had always been so sanguine. And now, dear Beatrice, we must get you home among us all again, and that as soon as possible. After consulting with my father and mother, I have ventured to decide on the following plan, which will, I hope and trust, meet your wishes. And this is, that I should come and fetch you myself, there being manifestly no one else to undertake the charge, even if I were willing to let them. Now, my dear Beatrice, you will, I hope, understand that I should not wish to press you unkindly, or hurry you at all unpleasantly, so soon after your great loss, but you will perceive that it would not at all do for us to travel together without being man and wife; and, therefore, I entreat you to become mine as soon as possible, after my landing at St. Thomas. May I not reckon sufficiently on your love to feel sure that you will not refuse me this request? I know your good sense will see the propriety of the arrangement.

“I hope (*D. v.*) to be with you in about a week after you receive this letter. I am obliged to wait a few days to complete necessary arrangements here, and the ship in which I have engaged a berth sails on Monday week. I have just got through college, and taken out my diploma, and I am, therefore, ready to go down to Mill Town and begin practicing my profession, whenever I shall have your own dear self to

accompany me. All here unite in kindest love to yourself and little Blanche. God bless you, my ever dear Beatrice.

“Yours, with sincere love,

“WALTER GREY.

“P. S. I inclose a little note from Hetty, and a short one from mamma, likewise.”

This letter Beatrice read and re-read, while the color burned brightly in her cheek, and her hand shook with emotion. In one week! one short week! should she see Walter! O! it was too much joy!—and then, again, she felt it was almost too soon, as the idea of the immediate marriage rose formidably before her mind, and she was inclined to dislike the arrangement altogether. Then, again, came the thought—“But I’m sure Walter would not have proposed this plan if it had not been right and necessary—and are we not already promised to each other?” “Dear Walter,” she thought, as she again looked at the letter, “how good and kind he is.” Tears filled her eyes, and throwing herself on her knees by her bed-side, she poured out her heart in thankfulness to her heavenly Father, and then rose, and taking the letter in her hand, she went to seek Madame de Tremonille. The latter was in the drawing-room reading, when Beatrice entered, and on seeing her, exclaimed—

“Why, Beatrice, dear, I was beginning to get quite anxious as to the contents of your letter. Pomio told me you had received one, but you have been shut up with it so long my curiosity could hardly stand it. However, I see my fears were groundless,” said she, smiling, and looking up into Beatrice’s blushing face, which certainly wore no very dolorous expression.

“Well then, read for yourself, dear Isabelle,” said Beatrice, putting the letter into her hands, “and then tell me your opinion, as to its contents”—and sitting down on the sofa by her friend’s side, and putting her arm round her waist, she hid her face against her shoulder till she had concluded.

“I am sure your Walter is right, dear Beatrice,” said Madame de Tremonille, when she had finished the letter. “I think it is the very best plan that could possibly have been arranged. I need not tell you that, so far as I am concerned, I am delighted with it: the wedding will of course, take place from this house, and it shall be conducted in such a quiet way, as will be consistent both with your circumstances, and my own. My dear friend,” she continued, kissing her, “I shall be so glad to see you, a happy wife, I am only sorry to lose you so soon.”

“Thank you, thank you, for all your kindness,” whispered Beatrice, “you have indeed been a kind friend to me.”

“O! don’t speak of that, dear Beatrice, but now let us consider what we have to do, during the ensuing week. What shall we have to get ready for you?”

“O! I shall not want much,” said Beatrice, “I should not like, you know, to leave off mourning yet; indeed I think I had better defer getting many new things, till I get to New York.

“Well you could certainly get them much better there, and it is very inconvenient traveling with a large wardrobe; but just for the occasion, you might wear a simple white dress—don’t you think so?”

“Yes, thank you,” replied Beatrice, “that will be the best plan. But I shall want to draw on our bankers in New York; I suppose I can do this through one of the banks here, can I not?”

“O! yes,” said Madame de Tremonille, “or I dare say you might procure the money from almost any of our principal merchants, who are in the habit of trading with New York.”

“Well then, dear Isabelle, will you take me into town to-morrow morning, and there we can arrange all these matters together?”

“Certainly, but would you wish to have a wedding-cake, dear Beatrice? because, if so, I shall take the charge of that upon myself.”

“Thank you, very much,” was the reply, “but my feelings lead me, to wish to have the whole

affair as quiet as possible—without any fuss or ceremony whatever.”

So it was arranged for the present, all further particulars being left for decision, till Walter Grey should arrive—this was now Wednesday, and by that day week, he might be with them. Blanche was admitted into the secret, and was very much pleased, as children generally are, when any event of importance is in prospect. Lucy Moore was set hard at work, next day, and Beatrice and Madame de Tremonille sewed and chatted together, enjoying each other's society as much as possible, before they should be called upon to part.

It was the morning of the following Tuesday. How anxiously had Beatrice looked out, toward where the blue line of ocean formed the boundary of the view from Palm Hill, to see if perchance some sail might not be visible on the horizon.

She almost blamed herself for listlessness and idleness, and yet, felt as though it were almost impossible to help getting up from her work, every few minutes, to have a look out. The telescope they had was so good a one, that she was able readily to discern if the vessel were one from her native land, and she felt that she should like, herself, to be the first to see that which might be conveying one so dear to her.

It was nearly morn. A longer time than usual,

had elapsed, since Beatrice had looked out to sea; for she had been busily engaged with Madame de Tremonille, in her room, trying on some article of dress. Now when she again looked, there was indeed a ship in sight, sailing proudly along with the "stars and stripes," floating from her mast-head, and she had already reached nearly midway, between the line of distance, and the harbor.

Beatrice rushed along the passage to tell the good news to Madame de Tremonille.

"I wish you joy, my dear girl," said her friend; "I trust the vessel may indeed have your Walter on board: at anyrate, I will order the carriage, and we will drive down and ascertain if he is really come."

"O! I feel he is; I *know* he's come," said Beatrice, earnestly.

"Well then, get ready, and we will go and welcome him," returned Madame de Tremonille.

"O! no; indeed I could not," said Beatrice, warmly. "It may seem odd to you, dear Isabelle, but I could not first see him again among a crowd of people at the wharf. I could not—indeed I could not—welcome him there."

Madame de Tremonille smiled—but she understood her friend's feelings, and did not press her going. She knew that Beatrice's heart was too full for her to trust herself to welcome her chosen husband amid the impertinent and curious gaze of a

gaping crowd, and a calm salutation would have been far too cold a reception.

“Well, then, Blanche can come with me,” said Madame de Tremonille; “she has seen Mr. Grey before, so she can introduce me to him.”

It was not long before the carriage rolled away from the house, leaving Beatrice in a state of great agitation and suspense. She walked uneasily up and down the veranda for some time. Then she filled the vases in the drawing-room with fresh flowers; and then she got an entertaining book and sat down to read, striving to fix her attention in order to make the time pass quickly: but though she held the book before her eyes, its pages said nothing but “Walter,” and we are afraid, she would not have stood any very strict questioning as to its contents.

Twice, with a little womanly vanity, she went to her own room to arrange her hair and dress, and to steal a glance at her mirror, wondering how Walter would think she was looking. And so the time passed away, till the sound of approaching wheels became audible. She stood at the door just long enough to see if there were a third figure in the distant carriage, and having seen that there was indeed a gentleman sitting beside Madame de Tremonille, she rushed into the drawing-room, and throwing herself on the sofa, she hid her face against the pillow, almost wishing (such is the contrariety of the

human heart) that Walter was not so near. She could not go to the door to welcome him. No; not for the world. Another moment, and voices were heard in the hall—*his* voice, and calling her name. Madame de Tremonille ran down the passage, and just opening the door and seeing Beatrice, she beckoned to Walter, and as soon as he entered she slipped quickly away—rightly judging that a *tete-a-tete* would be preferred by both.

On the blessed joy of that meeting we cannot intrude; it can only be understood by those who have been similarly circumstanced. We can only say that it was prolonged to so late an hour that Madame de Tremonille at last ventured to send Pomio to summon them to tea. During the evening, Mr. Campbell came in. It had been previously arranged between Madame de Tremonille and himself, that Walter Grey should stay at the Manse during the time previous to the wedding, and Mr. Campbell now came to welcome and claim his visitor. Walter was exceedingly pleased with the minister's appearance, though he at first rebelled a little at being separated from Beatrice, even by so short a distance. Madame de Tremonille, however, playfully but firmly insisted on it, telling him that he might spend as much time during the day at Palm Hill as he chose, but that at night he must take refuge at the Manse.

The following day was Tuesday, and that day week was fixed upon for the wedding, which was, of course, to be solemnized in the little Scotch church. During the few days intervening no event of note occurred. We can only say that Beatrice seemed, somehow or other, to find very little time for needle-work, (but perhaps this was Walter's fault,) and Madame de Tremonille, Jeannette and Lucy Moore were all hard at work for her. Mary and Caroline Gisborne came up on a voyage of inquiry, or rather curiosity to see Walter, their ostensible object being to visit Beatrice. Beatrice told them that if they would like to come to the church on the wedding-morning, she should be very happy to see them, but that she was going to have no bridesmaids or fuss of any kind whatsoever, as it was so soon after her father's death.

"Well, I think that is a very unsatisfactory wedding," said Caroline; "I shouldn't think I was half married without bridesmaids, and cake, and a breakfast, and all that. Why couldn't you have waited a bit, Beatrice, and then done the thing properly? I am sure Mr. Grey seems very comfortable at the Manse, and you will both be running away from us when you are married, and it will be such a pity to lose you so soon."

"Well, you see, Caroline," said Beatrice, smiling, "Mr. Grey wants to be back in America before

long, that he may begin to practice his profession ; and I have a little sister too, in New York, who is, I know, very anxious to see me."

"Why, you are never going to spend the first three weeks of your honeymoon on board ship!" said Caroline ; "how horrible ! I always suffer so from sea-sickness. I cannot imagine anything more unromantic !"

"Well," said Beatrice, "but I do not suffer so very much at sea, so it will not be so bad for me."

"Just fancy, then, next Tuesday being the last time we shall see you ; I think you have been very shabby not to give us a week more," said Mary.

"Well, so it is," said Beatrice, smiling ; "the best friends must part, you know, Mary. But I dare say I shall often hear of you from Madame de Tremonille."

"I know your being here has been a great pleasure to us," returned Mary ; "we are so miserably off for good society, particularly that of girls of our own age."

"I wish I could think," said Beatrice, gently, "that our intercourse had really been of any mutual benefit to each other. Perhaps we have not made it so profitable as we might have done—I feel as if it were so, on my part."

"Well, I don't know," said Caroline, "I was thinking, the other day, that I have thought more

of two or three little things that you have said on serious subjects, just in the course of common conversation, than I often have after hearing a sermon. I do not know how it is, I feel as if I liked what was good, and liked to talk about it, and yet, somehow it seems to slip out of my mind so very, *very* often. Sometimes I hear a thing that strikes me very forcibly, and makes me think seriously for some time after, but the impression seems soon to wear off. I cannot tell how it is."

"Dear Caroline," said Beatrice, earnestly—"it is because you allow your mind to be so much occupied with trifles that the things of eternity have but a secondary place. Is not this, dear Caroline, like what our Saviour said about the seed falling among the thorns? Do strive and make His service your first and chief end of life, and live as near to Him as possible, and then you will find that you have far more than impressions; religion would then be a reality."

"I will try, dear Beatrice," said Caroline, gravely—"but I fear I am very unstable."

"It is from want of prayer and want of real earnestness, I think," replied Beatrice; "suppose now, Caroline, you had a piece of needlework to do, the finishing of which quickly was of the greatest importance, do you think any one would believe you were earnestly trying to accomplish your task, if you kept

laying it aside for every trifling thing which attracted your attention?"

"No! indeed," said Caroline, musingly—"I think I quite understand what you mean. I have been very foolish."

"Caroline," said Mary, who had hitherto sat silently listening to the conversation; "I think you and I might be greater helps to each other than we are. I believe we both of us wish to do right and to live more like Christians, but I think our stupid little disputes and frequent petty quarrels often place stumbling-blocks in each other's way. It is a pity that sisters, thrown together so much as they must be, should not be more gentle and kind, more helpful and companionable to each other than they often are."

"Well! dear Mary, let us try," said Caroline, kissing her.

Just then Walter entered the room and the girls shortly after took their leave, saying that they hoped to see Beatrice once more before her marriage day.

The Monday following was a busy day for Beatrice; she had a good deal of packing to do, and several friends to say good-by to. Walter came up from the Manse several times, but complained that he could hardly get a sight of her. It was six o'clock in the evening, when all arrangements being com-

pleted, Beatrice and Madame de Tremonille, accompanied by Walter and Blanche, went to say farewell to widow Moore at her little cottage. Beatrice took her a nice copy of the Pilgrim's Progress, in large type, for a parting gift, and also two neat lilac print gowns for herself and Lucy. The presents were received with many expressions of gratitude and delight, and the good widow poured forth blessings on the head of Walter and Beatrice, begging them to let her come to church in the morning to see them married.

The permission was readily granted, and the party returned home, sauntering slowly along the road, as if willing to enjoy as much as possible their last evening amid the beautiful scenery around Palm Hill. Madame de Tremonille looked rather sad, though she tried to keep up her spirits. She felt much at the idea of parting with Beatrice, who had become as dear to her as a sister, and the thought of her widowed home seemed to press on her mind this evening more than usual. When they reached the house, they all sat down in the veranda for one last chat, and it was quite dark before they moved into the drawing-room to tea—and Walter, shortly after, took his leave. Madame de Tremonille and Beatrice prolonged the conversation to a late hour; there seemed so many last words to say; and Blanche, too, could not be prevailed upon to go to

bed for a long time,—she was so busy packing a little box of presents for Hetty, which she had been collecting ever since she came home from America.

At last the house was still, and Beatrice's was the only eye that remained unclosed. She stood leaning out of her window lost in thought. How many anxious feelings fill a young girl's mind on such an occasion; thoughts of the untried sphere that lies before them; thoughts vague and undefined of unknown trials and responsibilities yet to come, mingled with trustful feelings of love and hope. And yet, when there is true love to God in the heart, and a sure trust in the chosen one, how all these tumultuous feelings and anxieties resolve themselves into calm trust and confidence. One feels that another self is about to claim our best energies, and our dearest hearts' affections, and it is no slavery, indeed, to give these, but a daily work of love.

“Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands,
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands,
Love took up the Harp of Life and swept upon its chords with
might,
Smote the chord of Self, that trembling, passed in music out of
sight.”—ALFRED TENNYSON.

CHAPTER IX.

“Sail forth into the sea of life,
O gentle, loving, trusting wife;
And safe from all adversity,
Upon the bosom of that sea,
Thy comings and thy goings be.”—LONGFELLOW.

“Sweet is the smile of home—the mutual look,—
When hearts are of each other sure;
Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook—
The haunt of all affections pure.”—KEBLE.

THE following morning rose bright and beautiful—serene in tropical loveliness. Beatrice was scarcely awake when little Blanche came tripping lightly into her room, and jumped up on the bed, throwing her arms around her neck, and kissing her warmly, again and again. “Look, dear Beatrice,” she exclaimed, holding up some exquisite flowers, “is not this a lovely nosegay? do just smell it! I got up as soon as it was light to gather it for you, and I arranged it myself, only Jeannette tied the string round, and made the holder. It is for you when you go to church: do carry it in your hand to please me.”

“Indeed I will, darling child, with great pleasure,” said Beatrice; “but what time is it, Blanche?”

“Why, it is half past six, said Blanche, “and Mamma is up.”

“And we are to be at the church by eight? O! Blanche, I must get up directly and dress,” said Beatrice.

“I will run and tell Mamma you are awake—I know she wants to come and see you.”

Beatrice knelt down as soon as she had risen, lest she might not get another quiet time for prayer, and while she was still on her knees, Madame de Tremonille softly entered the room. When she had finished, they embraced each other without speaking—both their hearts were full.

“My beloved Beatrice,” whispered Madame de Tremonille, “God bless you! I feel as if I could hardly let you go from me so soon; and yet it were selfish, I know, to wish to detain you—your Walter has the best claim now. Only promise me, dear, that you will not forget me. Let us keep up a real correspondence with each other, and by that I mean, let us tell each other our real thoughts and feelings.”

“It will be a very, very great pleasure to me to do so, dear Isabelle,” said Beatrice; “and you know we have that blessed hope, the Christian’s hope of meeting again in that land where ‘parting shall be no more.’ Dear little Blanche will be a great comfort

to you—I feel she will. Dear child, she seems to grow more sweet and loving every day.”

““God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,”” dear Beatrice, said her friend, sighing as she spoke; “but oh! I cannot tell you what I have felt this morning. I passed through the spare-room, a little while ago, and there was your white dress lying on the bed with your wedding-bonnet, all reminding me, oh! so forcibly, of how it was with me some few happy years ago. Oh! how handsome and how proud of me my own Eugene was then! and he was so young, so noble, and so full of life and vigor, and I fondly looked forward to a long life together; and now—oh! my dear lost love!” and Madame de Tremonille leant her head upon the bed and burst into tears.

“Dear Isabelle,” said Beatrice, gently, after a few minutes’ pause, “do not distress yourself thus. You will make me so unhappy if you do. I shall think I have been the cause of it. Indeed, indeed, my heart feels for you, and never more than now; but have you not already trusted him with your Saviour?”

“Oh! I have, I have,” said Madame de Tremonille, raising her head; “it was only a moment’s weakness. But come, dear Beatrice, let me dress you now; we will set off early and walk slowly down to the church together. I hear Blanche calling

Jeannette to come and fasten her dress. She is going to wear one of her white dresses, with a light blue sash, and a little straw hat. I thought this would do nicely for her."

Even to the eye of a stranger Beatrice would have looked lovely, as she stood in her simple bridal robe of white muslin, on her wedding morn. And in the eyes of those who loved her, we need not say how much this loveliness was enhanced.

Walter and Mr. Campbell were waiting in the church when Beatrice entered, leaning on Madame de Tremonille's arm, followed by little Blanche, while a dusky group of servants appeared in the distance. A solemn and touching address was made to the young couple by the minister, and the simple service was soon concluded. When all was over, Beatrice looked up and saw Mary and Caroline Gisborne standing in a pew near the pulpit, and as the wedding-party stood conversing for a few moments in the aisle, before leaving the church, the two girls came up and joined them. Beatrice was leaning on Walter's arm, and the tears stood in her eyes as they kissed her and offered the accustomed good wishes.

"I think you had all better come up to Palm Hill and breakfast with us," said Madame de Tremonille. "Do come, Mr. Campbell—our friends will not leave us for an hour or two yet."

“How soon do you expect to sail, Mrs. Grey?” asked Mr. Campbell.

Beatrice started and colored; it seemed so strange to hear herself called by her new name. Walter relieved her from answering, saying that they had engaged a passage to New York on board the brig, “Gipsy Queen,” and that they expected her to sail in a few days.

The party now all moved slowly up the hill to the house, and while breakfast was getting ready, Beatrice went to change her dress for one suitable for traveling. On entering her room, she found, lying on her table, a most elegant dressing-case, with a slip of paper lying on it, on which was written—“For my dear friend, Beatrice Grey, from Isabelle de Tremonille.”

She opened it—it was completely and perfectly fitted up with every requisite for the toilet; all the tops of the bottles, etc., being of richly worked silver and the lining of dark-green velvet. Caroline and Mary had followed her to her room, and they were rapturous in their expressions of admiration. Beatrice turned toward the door; there stood Madame de Tremonille and Blanche. Throwing her arms round her friend’s neck, Beatrice thanked her in warm, but whispered words. Advancing timidly, Blanche took Beatrice’s hand, and holding out a small parcel, she said—“Will you keep this for my sake, dear Beatrice?” It was a very pretty silver fruit-knife.

Beatrice kissed her, and told her she admired it very much, and that she should like it much more on account of the giver. Caroline and Mary had each brought her a book—Caroline's was Krummacher's "Elijah the Tishbite," and Mary's was "Tennyson's Poems."

The time for parting seemed to come too quickly for all parties, and Beatrice felt as though she were leaving old friends, when Madame de Tremonille's carriage bore herself and Walter away from Palm Hill.

The remembrance of all that she passed through there, shot through her mind as they drove along the road, and she thought of her dear father's quiet grave in the little Scotch church-yard. She and Walter had paid a last visit to the spot, the evening before, and it now seemed as though it were something inexpressibly precious that they were now leaving behind, and bitter tears coursed down her cheeks as she thought of it. Walter looked at her, and seemed to read her thoughts, for he only pressed her hand in respectful silence, and said nothing.

They drove on past the town, up a very pretty road till they came to a delightful, countrified-looking little white cottage, with a neat garden all round it, and a porch trimmed with luxuriant creepers. At the little garden gate of this pretty place, Cato drew up his horses, seeming quite aware where he was to

stop. Beatrice looked at Walter in surprise —

“Why! Walter, where are we?” exclaimed she.

“It is all right!” said Walter, smiling, as he helped his wife to alight, and led her up the little gravel walk to the door—“I meant to surprise you, dear Beatrice, by bringing you to this pleasant little retreat, instead of a dirty, noisy hotel. It was through Mr. Campbell’s kindness that I procured it; it belongs to a brother clergyman of his, who is gone on some business to the other side of the island, and he has kindly placed this house at our disposal till the ship sails.”

On entering the door, they were kindly welcomed by the minister’s old housekeeper, who had everything in perfect order for their reception, and during the few days they were at the cottage, she attended to all their wants with scrupulous care and kindness, serving up the most delightfully-cooked repasts on snowy-white tablecloths, in a pretty china-service of gold and white. Vases full of fresh flowers were placed in all parts of the house, and yet, while their comfort was studied, they were left in perfect liberty.

Thus the time passed away, till the “Gipsy Queen” was ready for sailing. They had proceeded on their voyage about a week, when one afternoon, as Walter and Beatrice were sitting together on deck, enjoying the fresh breeze and gazing on the

vast blue expanse of water, which lay rolling and heaving around the vessel, the former suddenly exclaimed —

“O! look, Bee, do you not see three dark forms, like human figures, walking on the water, yonder in the far distance? I wonder what they can be!”

Beatrice turned her eyes in the direction pointed out by her husband, and there, indeed, rose against the horizon, three dark, straight forms, seemingly attached to no foundation.

“Do go and ask the captain what he thinks they are, love!” said Beatrice, “he can look through his telescope.”

Walter walked across the deck to where the captain was standing talking with the mate of the vessel. He had the telescope in his hand, and they were both apparently engaged in examining that which had attracted his own attention.

“I’m thinking that that ’ere must be a water-logged vessel, sir,” said the captain to Walter, as he came up; “there have been some very smart gales in these parts lately, and I guess she’s some merchant brig as has sprung a leak in the storm, may-be. If so, God help the crew, for we’re a precious long way from land for them to make it in an open boat. At anyrate,” said he, turning to the mate; “let’s alter our course a little, Mr. Jones, and make toward her, mayhap we shall find out where she’s from.”

Walter went back to communicate the news to his wife, and together they sat and watched the distant object, which they were now rapidly approaching, as the captain was anxious to reach it before dark, and had accordingly ordered all sails to be set.

When they had approached sufficiently near, they perceived that it was, indeed, the remains of some shipwrecked and completely water-logged vessel. Only the three spars were visible above the surface of the water, but from the tallest of these floated something like a handkerchief, apparently fastened there by the crew, either before they had met their death by drowning, or before they had taken to the boats to endeavor to make for some distant shore.

At about one hundred yards' distance from the wreck, the captain of the "Gipsy Queen," ordered that her sails should be furled, and that some of the hands should immediately man a boat, and proceed toward the ill-fated vessel, to endeavor, if possible to discover some tidings of the missing crew.

When the men returned, they brought with them a piece of stiff paper, evidently the cover of an old book, which they said, they found nailed to the mast, beneath a floating handkerchief.

In this was written, in blotted and almost illegible characters :

“This is the wreck of the “Mary Jane,” brig, from Baltimore—sprung a leak in the gale. Crew taken to boat, and steered in a north-westerly direction. Will any captain of a vessel, finding this, keep a look-out for them!”

The paper bore date five days before.

“Why, what has Jim Greenwood got there?” asked the captain, as the last of the sailors stepped on board, having something lying on his arm.

“Why it’s a cat, sir,” said the man—“there she was, just inside the round-house, on a shelf, and when she heard the splash of the boat’s oars, she began mewling and scratching away—so I thought I wouldn’t leave the poor creetur to perish—and her being the last to abide by the ship too—when all the rest had forsaken it.”

“I expect, Jim,” said the captain, laughing, “that the cat’s stay, was more one of compulsion than choice—”

“Well, sir, I can’t tell, but I’ll keep her, with your leave—somehow, I fancy she wouldn’t desert the ship—”

“Well, perhaps,” said the captain, “as the vessel is water-logged, and in no danger of sinking below her spars, the crew would have done better, to abide by her too—at anyrate, Jim, keep the cat—there are plenty of rats and mice in the hold, so she’ll be useful, I reckon.”

Great was now the excitement felt by all on board, as to whether there was any chance of overtaking the sufferers. It was evident, that for two days, at least, the ship might continue her course, at the usual rate of sailing, without expecting to meet them. After that time, the good-natured captain determined on lying-to, every night, and hanging out red-lights from the "Gipsy Queen," lest he should pass by them, in the dark; at the same time, occasionally altering his course during the day, in the hope of seeing them.

It was the evening of the fourth day, after the wreck had been discovered, that a dark object appeared, like a speck in the distance; which proved, on a nearer approach, to be indeed a boat, with several persons on board.

How often, during the past three days, had Beatrice come up on deck, and looked anxiously out for the poor ship-wrecked sailors! and now that there was really a boat in sight, she and Walter participated fully, in the excitement of their crew, as to the condition of its inmates.

It was dusk, before the boat and the ship met, for though the people in the former, had perceived the "Gipsy Queen," and rowed toward her, she evidently contained but few efficient hands, and her progress was very slow.

As they came alongside, Beatrice and her husband leant over the ship's side, and watched with mingled emotions of pleasure and pain, the emaciated, and yet thankful countenances of the sufferers, as they were assisted on board.

The party consisted of seven men, a woman, and an infant of some six or eight months old. The woman lay in a recumbent posture, with her head against the gunwale of the boat, apparently insensible to all that was going on around her. One of the sailors held the infant in his rough arms, and endeavored to hush its plaintive wailings.

When the party were all on board, and the poor woman had been carried down, and laid in a berth, the men explained, that she was the wife of the captain of the "Mary Jane;" that her husband, had been unfortunately drowned on the day of the wreck; and that the poor creature from grief, from want of proper food, and from exposure to the heat of the sun in an open boat, had become alarmingly ill, with alternate fits of delirium and exhaustion, from which even the presence of her babe could not arouse her. Beatrice took the infant from the sailor and endeavored to hush it to rest; and indeed, the poor child and its sick mother, now claimed her whole care and attention.

The baby was a delicate, weakly-looking boy, who lay in her arms moaning, and every now and

then opening its little feverish lips and looking up into her face, as if imploring pity.

Beatrice felt so glad that Walter was able to afford medical assistance to the poor mother, whom he did not consider in any immediate danger, although fever and suffering had rendered her, as yet, totally oblivious to all that was going on around her.

Three, four, five weary days did Beatrice spend in the sick woman's cabin, ministering to the wants of the poor creature, thus so friendless and alone. There was no other female on board, and she could not leave her uncared for.

The poor infant, too, was a great trial and charge, for it seemed to pine away hourly; and long before the mother had recovered her reason, Walter had despaired of its life. Occasionally Beatrice would go up on deck with her little charge, to see if perchance the fresh sea-breeze might not fan the lamp of life that was now flickering so faintly—but all seemed of no avail. The little eyes waxed dimmer and dimmer; the pulsations of the tiny heart fainter and fainter. Beatrice, indeed, felt it a trial—if the poor mother could only have returned to consciousness once more ere her babe's death! But it was not to be so; and Beatrice could only look to her heavenly Father for help, and trust Him with the result. The sight of the poor woman's sufferings

drew forth her warmest sympathy, and the feeling of how much she loved her Walter, deepened her pity for poor Mrs. Harvey under her deep loss. It grieved her heart to see the poor babe suffering so much, and yet to know that all human aid was of no avail; and yet, after five days and nights passed with the infant almost continually in her arms, she felt a sorrow as though she had lost something that had entwined itself about her heart's affections, when the freed spirit left its frail little tenement and returned to the God who gave it. And when the tiny body was committed to the deep that evening, there was scarcely a dry eye on board, even among the rough sailors.

It was sad work too, to break to the poor mother the intelligence of her second deep loss, on her restoration to consciousness; and for some time indeed, again her reason seemed to totter on its throne. But Beatrice's tender, sympathetic manner and unwearied kindness and attention, did much to restore the poor woman to tranquillity.

Thus the time passed on till they reached New York. How many and varied were Beatrice's feelings on again beholding her native city. Joy filled her heart at the thought of seeing her sister and other dear friends; but her father, and the home of her childhood, where were they?

The first care of Walter and Beatrice on the vessel, was to provide for the safety and comfort of poor Mrs. Harvey. She said she had a widowed sister to whose house she could go, but that she lived at the farther end of the city. It did not require many moments for the Greys to decide that they would first see the poor widow safe home before they should seek their own friends—for was she not friendless and alone, and cast, as it were, on their protecting kindness?

They found the sister a gentle, affectionate, warm-hearted woman, who received Mrs. Harvey with tears of mingled joy and sympathy—but she had five young children depending upon her for support, and although poor Mrs. Harvey might probably, in time, be able to earn something toward their mutual support, yet it was easy to perceive that, with such slender means, any additional burden would be felt.

Beatrice felt that she had the means of assistance, and could she withhold her hand in a case where the grief and poverty of others seemed so plainly to call for help and protection?

With her husband's consent she therefore earnestly begged poor Mrs. Harvey to accept of a small annuity from her, urging it for the sake of the little one whom she had nursed in his last hours.

The poor widow thanked her with tears of joy and gratitude, while Beatrice felt grateful to her heavenly Father for thus having afforded her the means of comforting the heart of the mourner.

It was with a beating heart that Beatrice took hold of her husband's arm, as he helped her to alight at the door of his father's house. They had not time to ring the bell before they heard an exclamation of joy from an open window above, and Hetty rushed down stairs and was in Beatrice's arms in an instant. Old Mr. and Mrs. Grey followed her, and welcomed their son and daughter-in-law with tears of joy and warm words of welcome. Aunt Louisa too came out into the hall, and seemed really glad to see them. O! how pleasant is the feeling of being welcomed, with gushing affection, by those we love. O! the blessing of a hearty, thorough, sincere welcome.

Hetty seemed, perhaps, the most overjoyed of any of the party. She kept fast hold of her sister's hand, while the tears stood full in her dark eyes, and her cheeks burned a rosy red, and she kept every now and then looking up in Beatrice's face, as though to assure herself of the reality of her presence.

Their joy was in some measure chastened by sorrow, in thinking of him who had gone from them and had returned no more to partake in this glad

welcoming ; and the mourning dresses of all served as a reminder of their grief, for both Mr. and Mrs. Grey had wished to show this testimony of respect to the memory of so much esteemed and valued a friend.

O ! how much there was to tell on both sides—how much news to communicate !

Beatrice was thought to be looking remarkably well, and very little altered by her residence in the West Indies.

“ We expected to see you come back a sort of mulatto color, dear Beatrice,” said Hetty laughing ; “ and you look as rosy, at this moment, as if you had never left home.”

Beatrice smiled ; “ O ! Hetty,” she said, “ you do not know how many beautiful places I have seen. I have often wished you could have been with me to enjoy them. But I must show you all my West India curiosities and sketches some time when I have time to unpack them ; and there is a little box too, for you, from Blanche.”

“ O ! how is dear Blanche ?” said Hetty ; “ I was so glad to see you I had not had time to ask after her.”

“ O ! she is such a sweet child,” said Beatrice ; “ she was always a dear little thing, but she is very much improved lately, and is so gentle in her manners, and yet so lively and warm-hearted, that I

was quite grieved to part with her, and to her adopted mother she is a treasure indeed."

"Madame de Tremonille is one of the most delightful, cultivated, and charming women I have ever met," said Walter. "She won my heart by her kindness and love to dear Bee; she seemed as if she could never do enough for her."

"Well, I do not know that that was so very extraordinary after all," said old Mr. Grey, smiling, and tapping his daughter-in-law on the shoulder; "she seems, somehow or other, to have twined herself round all our hearts; and as for this little gipsy," said he, catching Hetty by the arm and pulling her toward him, "I have adopted her as my second daughter!"

"Well, dear Beatrice," said his wife, "I should advise you to come up stairs now, and take off your bonnet and shawl. You will be glad to rest a little while before tea—shall you not, my dear?"

Beatrice readily consented, and followed Mrs. Grey up-stairs, holding Hetty by the hand.

There was abundant food for conversation that evening, and time flew rapidly away till nine o'clock struck, and old Socrates came with a lantern from Curzon street to take Mrs. Grant and Hetty home.

"O! come in, Socrates," said Beatrice, when she saw his black face, with its venerable-looking white hair, peeping in at the door.

“Me berry, berry glad to see you, Missy Betiss,” said the old man, advancing into the room, with his hat in his hand, “you look more sweeter and purtier dan when you left home. I glad to see Massa Walter, your husband—he good Christian man; God bless you boff, is my prayer.”

“Thank you, Socrates, I am sure,” said Beatrice; “but how have you been since I left home?”

“Well, purty well, Missy, for old man like me; but since I hear my old massa gone, I feel sometimes it time for Socrates to go too. I shall go and seek my massa soon, Missy. I am much older nor he was when de Lord took him, but while I live on dis earth I must lib wid you, Missy Betiss, and serve you.”

“Well, Socrates, we must manage that if we can,” said Beatrice; “but you might be thinking of leaving off work now.”

O! no, Missy; I never like to be idle while de Lord gives me strength to work. Please, Missis, are you ready?” said he, turning to Mrs. Grant.

Hetty cast a sorrowful look at Beatrice, at the thought of parting with her; but Beatrice whispered in her ear that she was to live at Mill Town with Walter and herself, and that then she hoped they should see plenty of each other. A gleam of joy shot across Hetty’s face, at this glad intelligence, and her cheeks colored with pleasure. Vague fears

of being left at school in New York, or of continuing to live in Curzon street with Aunt Louisa, had often troubled her mind, and Beatrice's words made the poor child go home and lie down on her pillow, that night, with a happy and light heart.

After Mrs. Grant and Hetty had left, the rest of the party continued for some time engaged in conversation. There seemed so much to say, that they were unwilling to separate.

"Beatrice, my dear," said Mr. Grey, "before you left this country, your dear father placed in my hands a copy of his will, which he had had drawn up a short time before. I have not opened it yet, waiting for your return to do so; if you think proper, I will read it to-morrow morning, when you are all assembled together."

"Certainly," said Beatrice, "whatever you think best. Dear Papa mentioned something to me, respecting the manner in which he had disposed of what he possessed. Though this is not much, yet, what we have will be a help to dear Walter, now he is not yet settled."

"How soon do you think of going down to Mill Town, my dear son?" said old Mrs. Grey.

"Well, mother, as soon as possible," said Walter; "you see, there is a good opening for me now, and our friends there seem to wish me to come at once, before a rival appears in the field."

There is only one old doctor in the place, and he is quite of the old school, and almost superannuated. I shall be ready to go down as soon as ever Beatrice is—”

“O! I have nothing to keep me beyond a few days,” said his wife, “I should like to see a few old friends and acquaintances, before we go; and as Hetty is to come with us, she will want a little time to get ready.”

“O! no—come,” said old Mr. Grey, “I intend Hetty to live with us; she has been here every day lately, and I should so miss her bright, merry face; you really must leave her behind you, Beatrice—”

“I made a solemn promise to dear Papa, on his death-bed,” said Beatrice, “that I would take her to live with us, and be a mother to her, as far as lay in my power. So please, let her come with us now, that she may get to consider our house as her home, and then, you know, dear Mr. Grey, she can come and visit you as often as you like—the distance from here to Mill Town, is not so very great—”

“Well, I see, I must yield the point,” said the old gentleman, sighing—“but what is your aunt to do?”

“Dear Papa told me, he had left her enough to support her comfortably,” replied Beatrice.

“I should think, aunt would probably go into one of the boarding-houses of the city. I think such a life would suit her.”

“By-the-by, Beatrice,” said Mr. Grey, “your old admirer, Mr. Chichester, is married; he did not seem to take your rejection of him so very much to heart.”

“I don’t think Chichester is the kind of man ever to take *anything* very much to heart,” said Walter; “his predilections were of a very evanescent nature: he was always fancying himself in love with some one or other, and if matters did not run smoothly, why then, with the utmost nonchalance, he could attach himself to some one else. I don’t call that sort of thing true love: it is not worthy of the name—”

“Whom has he married?” said Beatrice.

“Why, who of all others, but Alice Vaughan,” replied Mrs. Grey. “He has about got his match. She was just the kind of girl to marry for an establishment, for the sake indeed, of being married; and so perhaps she would feel less, than many others, the loss of any particular devotion toward her, on her husband’s part. So long as he is outwardly attentive to her, and gives her what dresses and ornaments she wants, I don’t suppose, she will care for much beside. Perhaps she might not have appreciated true love—so it will be the better for her, poor girl!”

“It often astonishes me,” said Walter, smiling, “how people find each other out, as partners for life:

some seem so exactly suited to each other, that they appear to have been cut out and moulded for no one else."

"Well, that is true," said his mother; "but yet we often see very happy marriages, where the husband and wife differ entirely and essentially, both in character and disposition; I was going to say, in tastes also, but of course, there must be some harmony there, for them to be companions for each other at all. But I have often noticed a strongly-marked characteristic on one side, counterbalanced by a deficiency in that point on the other—that where there is the greatest weakness in the one disposition, the greatest strength will often lie in the other—and that thus the two characters seem to dove-tail into, and balance each other, and so produce harmony and happiness."

"If you have all finished this discussion on matrimony," said old Mr. Grey, "I think we had better be thinking of going to bed, for our travelers must be tired."

Just as the party had all assembled for breakfast, the following morning, Hetty came running into the room, her face beaming with joy—and running up to Beatrice quite "sans ceremonie," she kissed her heartily, and then turning to Mrs. Grey, she said:

"Forgive me, dear Mrs. Grey, for coming so early; I have been awake ever since it was light, longing for the time to come when I might run over."

"Pray don't apologize, dear child, we are always glad to see you."

"Aunt Louisa sends her love, and says she will be here after breakfast," said Hetty; "but she was only just up, when I started, so she will not be here just yet."

"Come to breakfast, dear children," said Mrs. Grey, who was pouring out the coffee; "it will all get cold while you are standing there—and you can talk and discuss your eggs and toast at the same time."

"Well, at least we can look at each other," said Hetty, laughing, and skipping up to the breakfast table. "Now doesn't it look delightful, dear Mrs. Grey, to see those two dear faces here again?—it seems almost like a dream to me—I have longed to see Beatrice for such a dreadful time."

"Why you have not been so very, very dull and melancholy, I hope, dear Hetty," said her sister.

"Why, perhaps not exactly so bad as that," she replied; "but Aunt Louisa kept me always in such prim propriety, I felt as if I could hardly breathe freely when I was with her—she used always to be telling me to sit straight, or to turn out my toes, or some fidgety thing or other. If she asked me to

read aloud, it was always either too fast or too slow, or too loud or too low. I seemed always to be in a bother as to whether I was doing right or not, and that made me ten times worse. She is so old-maidish and fudgy, one can't fancy she was ever married."

"Come, come, Hetty," said Beatrice, gravely, "you must not speak so harshly of Aunt Louisa; it is not right. She meant kindness toward you, when correcting you, only perhaps her manner of doing it was not pleasant."

"Kindness!" said Hetty, warmly; "well I thought it down-right teasing. I certainly never took it for kindness—I never was so plagued in my life."

"Perhaps you were not attentive enough, in trying to remember the little faults she told you of, Hetty, and that made matters worse."

"Well, perhaps not," said Hetty, slowly and thoughtfully; "and yet, Bee, when I did try, it did not seem to be much better."

"I think great allowances should be made for your aunt," said old Mr. Grey; "she has had many trials and disappointments in life, and you should bear with her as gently as you can. I believe she is really and truly fond of you both at heart."

"Well, perhaps she may be after all," said Hetty. "I know that when I had that attack of influenza, Mrs. Grey, I thought Aunt Louisa seemed very care-

ful of me ; she used to come and see me many times in the day, and bring me nice little things she had made for me with her own hand. Though she never said much, I thought she seemed to feel for me."

"Well, dearest," said Beatrice, "always try and judge as charitably of every one as you can. You cannot expect to find everybody equally pleasant and agreeable in their manners ; but allowances should be made for all, and we should never try to find out what a person's faults are, but think all the good of them we possibly can."

"Walter, I have been thinking, this morning," said his father, "that it would be a good plan for you to take the steamboat and go down to Hartford, and then go on to Mill Town and look out for a house, and get it in some tolerable order before your wife and Hetty go. You see, your mother's relations in the place are strangers to Beatrice—almost, I may say, to ourselves—and it would be much more pleasant for her to have a home to go to at once."

"It would, indeed, father," said Walter. "What do you say to that plan, dear Bee ? I do not know that I should like to choose a house without consulting you."

"Well, I will trust to your taste, Walter," said his wife, smiling ; "but indeed I fancy you will have little choice. From your description of it, Mill Town appears to be a very small place, and I

suppose, we shall have to put up with what we can get."

"I think you had better choose what furniture you want here, Walter, before you go," said his mother, "and then take it down with you on the boat; you can get it so much better and cheaper here, and then Beatrice and you can please your own taste."

"Yes, mother, that will be a capital plan," said Walter. "When could you go out with me, Bee? I should be glad to start for Mill Town in a day or two."

"Well, then, suppose we go this morning," said Beatrice; "we are more likely to have callers in the afternoon, and I suppose, I ought to be at home to receive them for the next day or two."

"Do let me go out shopping with you, dear Beatrice," said Hetty, "I have very good taste, you know," she continued, laughing; "I should choose such charmingly pretty things, if it were left to me!"

"Left to you, indeed, Hetty," said her brother-in-law, laughing too; "I am afraid there would be some queer things sent down to Mill Town if we trusted to your selection. But come, at anyrate, and give us your opinion."

"Indeed, Master Walter, you are very polite," said Hetty, tossing back her dark curls; "perhaps

if my opinion is so little valued, I shall not deign to give it."

"Come, come," said Beatrice, "don't be quarreling, you naughty creatures; come with me upstairs, Hetty, I want to give you Blanche's little box now; poor dear child, the making up of that parcel was the result of a great deal of toil and labor on her part. She began to collect things for you almost as soon as we arrived at Palm Hill."

"O! yes," said Hetty, "but wait two or three minutes, dear Bee, till I have finished breakfast. I have been talking so much I have forgotten to eat."

"I forgot to ask you, Hetty, if you had heard anything lately of Pat Ryan and his wife?" said Beatrice.

"O! yes," said Hetty, "I have been to see them several times—at least I have seen Biddy and the children. Pat I only saw once, after you left, just the day before he sailed. Poor fellow, he seemed to feel parting from his wife and children so much. I did not see him at the time, but Biddy told me that 'he cried bitterly, sure enough.' I like Pat, he seems such a warm-hearted fellow."

"When an Irishman is a good husband at all, he is generally a *very* good husband," said old Mr. Grey, who had been sitting quietly reading by the fire; "they are a very affectionate, warm-hearted race of people."

“I remember a friend of mine, who was an eye-witness of the fact, telling me a very pretty story about an Irishman’s love for his wife,” said Walter; “I will tell it you while Hetty finishes her breakfast. It happened a short time ago, when some troops were being shipped from the jetty at Kingston, near Dublin, for some foreign station. This poor man was in one of these regiments, which had been ordered abroad, and his heart was very sore at the idea of parting with his wife, to whom he had been lately married, who was not to be allowed to go with him. There are only fourteen soldiers in every company who are allowed to be married, according to English military law, and it appears that Pat and his wife had not obtained this military permission to be married—being over the prescribed number—yet, nevertheless, married they were. This regulation may be a necessary one, as far as government expenses are concerned, but certainly it is a very cruel and wrong one as regards the men themselves. So when the time came for embarking, poor Aileen was told that she could not, by any possibility, be allowed to follow her husband; and it was with a heart almost bursting with grief that she waved farewell to him from the quay, while Pat stood on the deck looking at her in a terrible state of mind. The wife, my friend told me, was a fine, handsome-looking girl, and every one seemed to feel

for and pity the young couple, but it was of no use; military law knows no mercy. The anchor was heaved, and the ship swung round, and most of the officers of the regiment had retired below into the cabin. The poop-deck was already eight or ten feet from the edge of the quay, when, with a groan of agony and resolution, Pat made a tremendous leap from the deck to the shore, and rushing to his wife, he caught her in his arms, and with an almost superhuman effort he leaped on to the deck again with the treasure he could not bear to part from, and which he had thus risked his life to obtain. A shout of admiration rose from the bystanders, and this, together with the crash of the heavy weight on the poop, brought up the officers; and on the circumstances being told them, Pat was allowed, to his great joy, to take his Aileen aboard with him, with full military privileges."

"That is a very pretty story, Walter," said Hetty; "but I wonder he could possibly leap that distance with his wife in his arms."

"Why you see," said Walter, "I suppose the deck was probably a good bit lower than the quay, so that the return jump was the easiest; but it is astonishing what strong love and powerful will can do. I have myself seen people perform feats of strength, under the influence of some great excitement, which I know they could not possibly have done in a cooler moment."

"It is just in the same way," said Mr Grey, "that a person can walk three times the distance, when eagerly engaged in pursuit of any object, that he could if just taking a quiet, aimless ramble; the mind appears to endue the body with wonderful energy."

"I am sure," said Mrs. Grey, "I have often felt, when my children were little, that if any of them were ill, I could lose my rest for nights together sitting up with them; and at another time, when I had nothing to interest me, if I only missed a few hours' sleep I should feel greatly wearied."

"Well! I think Mrs. Grant will be here directly," said Mr. Grey, rising from the breakfast table as he spoke—"suppose we adjourn to the study before you go out shopping; I should like to get that little business over of which we were speaking last night, Beatrice."

"Certainly, if you wish it, I am ready," said she, sighing; and taking Walter's arm, she crossed the hall into the little study, followed by the rest of the party.

Just at that moment Mrs. Grant came in, and the will was read to them all. It was found to be just as Mr. Evelyn had told Beatrice. To his sister Louisa he had left a comfortable maintenance for the term of her natural life, and after her death, it was to revert to his two daughters. The rest of the property, with the exception of trifling legacies to

Socrates and one or two old servants and dependents, was to be divided equally between Beatrice and Hetty; that of the latter remaining under her sister's control till she should come of age or marry. To Walter Grey were left President and the phaeton, and such books and silver plate as had been saved from the fire.

Mrs. Grant, though she seemed to feel her brother's kindness in thus providing for her, appeared out of spirits. Hetty had told her that she was to go to Mill Town to live with her sister, and to say the truth, she did not much like the idea of being left alone in New York. Beatrice read her feelings and begged her aunt to come down and pay them a visit as soon as they should be settled. She felt it wrong to exhibit any want of cordiality toward her aunt, for though she was not, perhaps, particularly pleasant as a visitor, Beatrice felt it her duty to show her the respect and attention due by a niece. The rest of the morning was spent in selecting furniture, crockery, etc. Carpets and curtains could not, of course, be bought till the house was decided upon, and when Walter should come back for his wife and Hetty, he was to bring all necessary particulars as to dimensions, that they might be able to take down with them whatever was required.

It was agreed that Walter should start, the following morning, in search of their new home; it was,

indeed, an important epoch in their lives, and they both felt it to be so. The untried future lay before them; Walter's career as a physician was not yet begun, and Beatrice was to be surrounded by new faces and strange scenes, and fresh responsibilities. They had not even yet a dwelling-place selected, but they both felt that they could leave all trustfully in the hands of their heavenly Father—that the world was not to be their home, but only a pilgrim state, and that Mill Town was, as it were, but an inn by the way-side.

“Where a sunlit isle, so greenly bright,

Lay circled in ocean's arm—

Where the tall palms waved in dancing light,

And the breeze blew soft and warm—

He sought himself a home.

Where the gorgeous town, its domes of gold

And turrets bright, upreared—

Where the hum of multitudes untold,

Like murmuring seas, was heard—

He sought himself a home.

Where the hills, with rolling clouds between,

Rose o'er hanging, gentle vales,

Which, bathed in a glow of sunlit green,

Lay shelter'd from wint'ry gales—

He sought himself a home.

But ever and aye with wearied mind,

He restlessly long'd for change—

Oh! where might the wanderer shelter find?

Oh! where—through the wide earth's range—

Where should he find a home?

As he lay, one morn, on his pallet bed,
He watch'd a lark uprise,
And straight resolv'd, 'I'll bend my way,
The road the songster flies—
There will I find a home !'

He watch'd its flight with anxious gaze,
When soaring straight on high,
It turn'd aside to right nor left,
But carolled in the sky—
How might this be his home ?

It seem'd to him that that sweet bird,
Said, ' Seek not rest below—
Turn not thy thoughts to earth again—
Sad scene of grief and woe—
In Heaven must be thy home !'—R. V.

CHAPTER X.

“It is beautiful, it is glorious, to serve what one loves. * * It may be by giving one’s heart’s blood, or quite simply in making tea. It is all the same—it only depends upon time and opportunity.”

FREDERIKA BREMER.

“Mon ami, le public a bon nez, et ne se méprend guere.”

MADAME DE SEVIGNE.

It was not very long before Beatrice and Walter were settled in their new home at Mill Town. A house had been procured by Walter with but little difficulty, and he had then returned to bring his wife, Hetty, Socrates, and two servant girls, from New York. The new home was quite a country place, just outside the town, and it had delightful fields and trees, and a well-stocked orchard surrounding it. The trees were just in the full freshness of spring, and the blossoms filled the air with their sweet perfume. Along one side of the house lay a long strip of lawn, separated from the orchard by a low fence. This was prettily laid out in flower-beds, and many gay flowerets were already shining brightly there. On the other side of the house rose a sunny green

slope, with a small wood crowning the summit, and at the foot of this, on the other side, ran a sparkling little brook, forming the boundary of the place in that direction. Beatrice was very much pleased with it—all things looked so countrified and fresh, and it was quite conveniently situated for Walter, too. The phaeton had been disposed of in New York—exchanged for a doctor's buggy—though President was, of course, too old a favorite to be parted with; and it was not long before Walter might be seen driving about in various directions, actively engaged in his new vocation. Mill Town, though as yet but small and scattered, was tolerably populous, and old Mrs. Grey's relations being some of the oldest residents, it was easy for him to gain introductions. Walter had a particularly kind and gentle manner, too; and this, together with his really by-no-means-to-be-despised professional skill, soon procured him abundant employment.

Beatrice had scarcely arranged her new house in anything like tolerable order, when their Mill Town relations came to call upon them. Beatrice was standing in the sitting-room with Hetty, busily engaged in putting up muslin window-curtains, when the door-bell rang, and Socrates ushered in the party. By good fortune Walter was at home, and came in to help his wife to entertain their visitors. Mr. Melville, the head of the family, was a rather

stout, yet handsome old gentleman, of about sixty, with a shining bald head, and dreamy-looking gray eyes, by no means devoid of intellectual expression. He had a large and flourishing farm, the boundaries of which extended almost to the confines of the Greys' little home. This farm had been in the family for four generations, and was at present admirably managed by the old steward, Mr. Brian O'Reilly, which was, indeed, a most fortunate thing for Mr. Melville, who was rather of a philosophic and literary turn of mind than given to agricultural pursuits. He was a kind-hearted gentleman, not foolish or weak, but rather wanting, perhaps, in the ability to command and manage. This deficiency was, however, made up for by his wife, who was a tall, fresh, agile woman, who seemed always on the alert—always on springs—always planning, “fixing,” or arranging something. Full of kindly feeling, yet warm and impetuous, she ruled her husband and children with alternate love and severity. Her only daughter, Laura, was a sprightly brunette, good-looking certainly, but with something a shade too quizzing and cynical in her expression and manner to win love easily from strangers. Although by no means an uninformed girl, she allowed herself to be the slave of gossip; and from thus interesting herself about trifles, she warped her mind from its native superiority. Not a circumstance that had occurred

in a neighbor's house was unknown to Laura—not a piece of intelligence did she hear but it would fly like wild-fire over the parish. It would have been really next to an impossibility for Laura to keep a secret. She itched to tell a piece of news directly she heard it; and she really persuaded herself that the sly hints she threw out, telling the news by implication, were not at all breaches of the confidence which had been reposed in her by those intrusting her with the secret. Like all persons of this class of character, she was given to remarking, sometimes not too charitably, upon the persons, manners, and household arrangements of all her acquaintances. All this, as Beatrice afterward discovered, had become almost a habit with poor Laura, who had really a fund of good nature and kindly feeling in her disposition. But her mother had, from childhood, encouraged her in making satirical remarks, and laughed at her lively repartees and quaint sallies.

There were two sons in the family—the eldest, William, was a lawyer in New York. The second, Claude, was a handsome, intelligent fellow, of some nineteen or twenty years. He was the spoiled child of the family, and his mother's especial pet and pride. A wild and wayward nature was that of Claude, and it was found next to impossible to induce him to apply himself steadily to any one profession; but he

was allowed pretty much the scope of his own free-will—his mother never doubting but that her darling son would be sure to distinguish himself some day or other; and his father, unfortunately, in his gentle, easy way, troubling himself very little about the matter. But more of Claude Melville hereafter—for we must not forget that, while we are thus introducing him to our readers, we have left his parents and sister standing in Beatrice Grey's drawing-room, making their first acquaintance with their new relation.

Beatrice had a lively and pleasant manner in company, which soon made both her visitors and herself at their ease. She particularly liked old Mr. Melville—he seemed so gentle and fatherly, and showed so much quiet good sense in his remarks. His wife, too, seemed inclined to be very friendly and agreeable, and promised to assist Beatrice in any way she could, whether in domestic matters, or in making acquaintances among the neighbors. While Walter and Beatrice entertained Mr. and Mrs. Melville, Laura was busily chatting with Hetty, and they finally left the room together, at Laura's request, to reconnoiter the rest of the house and the garden. After having duly surveyed everything, the two girls continued for some time walking up and down on the lawn, and Laura said to her companion:—

“I know this place very well by sight. A lady named Parkinson lived here for many years, but

she was such a very reserved person that we scarcely saw anything of her. Poor thing! I remember sometimes, when I was passing by on the road outside, I used to see her walking up and down here in the garden in a black dress, with a book in her hand, reading—and she looked so tall, and thin, and care-worn, I pitied her—but I never liked to go in and seek to comfort her in any way, for she always seemed to shun society.”

“What made her so unhappy?” said Hetty.

“Why, we heard something of her story from an old housekeeper of hers,” replied Laura: “Mrs. Parkinson was a widow, with an only son—a bad, vicious-looking man, of dreadfully intemperate habits, who used to annoy her a great deal, and cause her much trouble of mind. He used to live mostly in New York, and when he got short of money, he would come down here and wheedle his poor mother out of nearly all she possessed, and then go back and spend it in drinking and gambling, and all sorts of wickedness.

“Well, to make matters worse, this wretched man was married, some years ago, to a poor, unhappy, gentle girl, (his second cousin, I believe,) who little knew his character when she accepted him; and after passing two miserable years with him, she died, poor thing, leaving one little boy, a pretty, delicate-looking little fellow.

"I remember Mamma and I met Robert Parkinson and his little son, one day, standing just outside the gate. What a contrast it was—the bloated, red-faced man, and the pretty blue-eyed child: it reminded me of an angel and a fiend.

"Whenever Robert Parkinson came here to see his mother, he always brought the child with him, and the old lady wanted him to let her have charge of little Francis altogether, and thus keep him away from the city and the dreadful places his father frequented. But it was of no use, he would not part with the child; indeed his affection for him seemed about the last lingering spark of goodness in his character.

"Well, old Mrs. Norris told us, that one day last summer, Mr. Parkinson came down here from New York, in a dreadful state—scarcely sober—and that there was, as usual, a scene of recriminations, entreaties, and angry words between him and his poor mother; and when he went away the old lady seemed very low and miserable, and cried very much, telling Mrs. Norris that her son would break her heart. Whether this was really the case, I cannot tell; but a few evenings after, she was found sitting under that large tree yonder, near the orchard, with her Bible in her hand, quite dead. She is buried in the church-yard at Mill Town, and the house has remained untenanted till now, as the poor people about

here believe that her ghost haunts the garden, gliding slowly up and down with a book in its hand."

"Poor! poor lady!" said Hetty, sighing—"I can't say I am afraid of the ghost myself, but I shall never see that old tree without thinking of her sad end."

"I wonder what has become of that poor little Francis," said Laura, "it does seem so wretched for a child to be left among such people as his father's associates."

"It does, indeed," said Hetty.

"Who is that old black man, working in the garden?" asked Laura.

"O! that is old Socrates, and a good old man he is—he has been a servant in our family ever since Beatrice was quite a little girl, and now he has become so much attached to us all, that he would not hear of leaving us when dear Papa died, so Walter and Beatrice have brought him down here."

"Don't you think you shall find it horribly dull in this place?" said Laura.

"O! no," said Hetty; "why I can't fancy how it could be dull. There are so many, many things to be done in the country—particularly where there is such a nice garden as we have—and then, you know, there are books, and music, and work. Beside, I never could be dull with Beatrice; and if all's well, I am to go, in the autumn, to stay with Wal-

ter's father and mother, and have lessons from different masters; and I ought to study hard during the summer months, to prepare for them—so you see, I am not likely to feel it dull."

"Well!" said Laura, "I have books and music, and all that sort of thing, but I find the place terribly monotonous. I go out and chat with neighbors and pick up what little news I can, or I don't know how I should get on."

Hetty looked at her in some surprise, and then said: "Well, I don't see what interest there can be in other people's affairs; unless they are persons we know very well, I shouldn't care to hear about them."

"Well! you're a queer girl," said Laura, laughing—"but come, I think mamma and papa will be waiting for me; let us go into the house."

Mr. and Mrs. Melville and Laura soon took leave, begging the Greys and Hetty to come over to Springfield and see them, as soon as they could.

"Well! these are pleasant people, my dear," said Mr. Melville to his wife, as they walked down the road toward their house; "I think Mrs. Grey is a remarkably sweet young woman."

"Well! I've no fault to find with her," replied she, "but I'm afraid our new doctor is rather young-looking—why, he cannot certainly be more than twenty-five."

“Well! Mamma, he looks sober enough,” said Laura, “I don’t think I saw him laugh once while we were in the room; but, perhaps, you had better make him a present of a pair of spectacles to give him a venerable appearance.”

“Well! my dear, he laughed heartily enough when you and the younger sister were out of the room. I think him a very gentlemanly young man, and he will be such a nice companion for William and Claude, when they are down here.”

“I think Henrietta Evelyn seems a very nice girl,” said Laura, “and that is more than I usually say of any one after a first visit. She is pretty, too, don’t you think so, Mamma?”

“Yes! love, she certainly is — but it is quite a different style of beauty from that of her sister, with those long, dark curls, and merry hazel eyes.”

“Well! I feel very glad, altogether, that they are come to live so near us,” said Laura.

How much did Beatrice and Hetty enjoy the country that summer! But little happened to annoy them beyond a few occasional troubles with servants — one of the girls they brought from New York going away in a fright, after hearing, from some idle tattler, the foolish story of old Mrs. Parkinson’s ghost.

Aunt Louisa came down and spent a month with them, and was never in such good humor—although, it is true, that she occasionally did her best to keep her nieces in order, and rather fidgeted Beatrice by finding fault with the manner in which various things about the house were dusted, arranged, or cleaned—and poor Hetty came in sometimes for a reprimand if there was the slightest sign of disorder in any part of her wearing apparel—nevertheless, matters went on, in general, very smoothly.

Old Mr. and Mrs. Grey came down from New York several times in the course of the summer, just to spend a day or two, as the former could not well be longer spared from his ministerial duties, and there were several families around who were pleasant neighbors, beside the Melvilles, with whom they were very intimate.

It was one fine evening about the middle of July, Beatrice was standing leaning over the fence that separated the orchard from the lawn, talking to Hetty, awaiting her husband's return from visiting a patient. It was growing quite dusk, but it was so cool and pleasant, that it seemed a pity to go into the house.

It was not long before they saw Walter's buggy coming slowly along the road, with President proceeding at only a walking pace.

“Dear me!” exclaimed Beatrice, “I wonder if

anything is the matter! Why can Walter be driving so slowly?" and she ran down the garden walk, followed by her sister. They soon saw that Walter was leaning down over some object resting on his left arm, while with his right he guided the reins; and he appeared to be so intently absorbed, that it was not till the buggy came close to his wife and sister, that he perceived they were there.

"O! come on to the house, dear Bee!" he exclaimed, "make haste, love, and I will tell you all!"

Beatrice started when she saw Walter lift from the buggy what seemed to be the inanimate body of a little boy. His jacket and trowsers, though of fine cloth, were soiled and dusty, and his fair hair clustered thickly round a forehead that was pale and cold as marble; his eyes were closed, and Beatrice would have thought him dead, had not Walter hastily assured her to the contrary.

"I am going to carry him up-stairs and lay him on your bed, Hetty," said Walter. "Poor little fellow! I discovered him just in time," continued he, going slowly up the staircase with his burden. "He was lying in a ditch about half a mile from the house, and it was so dusk I could scarcely discover what it was among the thick, dank green grass; but I got out of the buggy to see, and found him in this state. Where he comes from we cannot tell till he is restored to consciousness."

It was with a careful and gentle hand that Beatrice, under her husband's superintendence, knelt by the bedside of the little sufferer, and administered the necessary restoratives; and it was not very long before he opened his blue eyes and looked at her for a moment, and then closed them again with a helpless sigh of weakness. After the lapse of a quarter of an hour, he seemed somewhat revived, and began looking curiously and anxiously around him. Beatrice whispered in his ear: "Do not be alarmed, dear child; there are none but friends here."

"Where am I?" said the little boy. "O! I'm so glad to be out of that dusty road. Is this my grandmamma's? I was coming to my grandmamma's. Naughty men took poor Papa away, and turned me into the street, so I came to look for my grandmamma."

Beatrice made him be quiet for the present, for he was too weak to talk much, and he soon fell into a refreshing sleep. About nine o'clock, after tea, Beatrice again came up-stairs to visit her little patient, and found him awake, and looking considerably better. The little fellow raised himself on one elbow, and looked inquiringly round the room.

"In my grandmamma's room," he said, "there was a blue paper like this; but you are not my grandmamma; she was tall, and had a white cap

on. Will you fetch her, please? She was always good to poor Franky."

"Why, Beatrice," said Hetty, who was in the room, "this must surely be little Francis Parkinson! the grandson, you know, of the old lady who used to live here. Isn't your name Francis Parkinson, dear?"

"No, but my Papa's name is Mr. Parkinson," said the child, eagerly fixing his blue eyes on Hetty.

"My name is Franky, and I had a grandmamma who lived near here, and had a room like this, and her name was 'grandmamma mother,' I think, for I used to call her Grandmamma, and Papa used to call her 'mother.'"

"You are quite right you see, Hetty," said her sister, "it is the same child. Poor little fellow! what is to be done with him?"

Little Francis had raised himself half out of the bed, and now said to Beatrice:

"I'm sure this *must* be my grandmamma's room. This is the same old bed that Papa and I used to sleep in, for here's a place where I scratched the wood with a pin to make a picture of Papa, and then I know he scolded me, and said that grandmamma didn't like her beds scratched."

"It is your grandmamma's house," said Beatrice, "but she is gone a long way off, so I must be kind to you to-night. Lie down now, Franky, and go to

sleep, and I will tell you more about her to-morrow. I am going to send you up some nice new milk and a bun for your supper; so now good night, dear child."

Little Francis was easily pacified, and when he awoke next morning, he was surprisingly better, and although still weak, he was able to walk about with Hetty.

It appeared that somehow or other the poor child had managed to make his way from New York to Hartford, having a little money in his pocket, and having frequently traveled the same journey with his father; that on arriving at Hartford he began to walk along the Mill Town road, and met a man with a cart, who took him up and carried him some considerable distance, and then set him down, and the little fellow trotted on, the best way he could—asking of all he met the way to Mill Town, and occasionally buying a cake or a piece of bread; and that he had nearly reached his late grandmother's house, when the unwonted exertion, and the fatigue induced by walking so far on a hot summer's day, completely overcame him, and he lay down in a ditch by the wayside, where he was found by Walter.

What surprised them all was how so young a child could have found his way so far! But so it was—and it now only remained to be decided what was the best thing to do with him. It was at length

settled that Walter should go to New York and endeavor to find out Mr. Parkinson; for certainly, bad though he appeared to be, he had the best claim to the child, and it would not be right to dispose of little Francis without consulting him.

There was something peculiarly sweet and loveable, about the little fellow: it seemed as though scenes of coarse revelry and wickedness, had passed by him with their foul breath, and left him unpoluted. There was a shade of melancholy sadness, over his little pale face, and a delicate transparency in his cheek, that reminded one of a fragile hothouse flower.

He appeared very much grieved, when told of his grandmother's death. He said the garden looked very dull, without grandmamma and her brown Bible—"she used to tell me about the Bible," continued he—"and our dear Saviour, and the beautiful angels—and such nice things: once, Papa left me here for three days; oh! that was such a nice time! it was so quiet and still in this pretty garden; and people, where we go in to New York, seem always to make such a noise—and they never talk about the angels at all—and when they say God's name, they don't seem as if they loved him."

Beatrice looked at Hetty, and smiled a sad smile: it was sweet to see so pure-minded a child, and it

was sad indeed, to think to what he had been exposed.

Walter resolved to start, the following day, in search of Mr. Parkinson, but how to discover his whereabouts he could not tell. At last Beatrice suggested, that they might probably be able to gain some intelligence concerning him from Mrs. Norris, the old housekeeper, who had lived with his mother so many years. After her mistress' death, she had rented a small cottage in Mill Town, and Beatrice and Hetty walked over to see her, and learned from her, that the H——hotel, in New York, was the place where Mr. Parkinson usually boarded; for she said, she had seen the direction often on his carpet-bag—but beyond that, she knew nothing.

We will not weary our readers with an account of all the annoyances experienced by Walter, while endeavoring to find out the wretched Mr. Parkinson. He learned from the waiter at the hotel mentioned by old Mrs. Norris, that he had been boarding there, till very lately, and that he was in the habit of frequenting a gambling-house on——street; but that a few nights before (evidently the occasion referred to by little Francis) the police had entered the house at a late hour of the night, and arrested several of the party, turning the rest of the people in the place, out into the street, and locking up the doors. The waiter said he had seen in the papers

that Mr. Parkinson and several others, had been discharged from custody, the following day, after paying a fine, and that he had come to the hotel, making inquiry for his little boy, and that he seemed a good deal distressed, when told that nothing had been seen of him; "but he did not appear to understand much else, or to know how to set about looking for him, sir," continued the waiter, "for he was most too far gone in liquor, at the time; indeed I may say, I have hardly ever seen him sober, sir, and his health has failed a good deal, of late. That poor child had a sad life with his father, though in general, I guess, he was pretty kind to him, unless he was more than ordinary-ways drunk—and then, may-be, he would ill-treat him a bit: but the little fellow never complained, and he would color up and seem as fierce-like as possible, if he heard any one saying anything ag'in' his father. I'm right glad, sir, to hear as you've got the little chap safe in the country—"

"I wish I could find out his father," said Walter.

"Well, sir, as I said before, he left this 'ere hotel some days ago, and where he's gone I can't tell. May-be if you advertised he wouldn't see it, for I guess, he ain't much given to reading."

Walter thanked the man for his information, and again walked out into the street, very much unde-

cided how to act—indeed he almost gave up the idea of searching for Mr. Parkinson, it seemed so hopeless in such a city as New York, and he resolved that the rest of that day should be spent quietly at his father's house, which was, of course, his home, while in the city.

The next day, as Walter was slowly walking along in one of the most crowded thoroughfares of the city, he passed by an undertaker's store, and happening, accidentally, to look in, he saw standing there a young man, of rather dandyish appearance, whose features seemed familiar to him. He stopped and looked again—it was Claude Melville.

“Why Claude! what are you doing here?” exclaimed Walter, in astonishment—“this is the place that, of all others, I should least have expected to find you in!”

Claude did not look particularly glad to see Walter; he started and colored slightly, when the latter entered the store, but he advanced to meet him, and shaking hands, he said, with a forced laugh: “Well, to say the truth, it is; but you see, I'm getting a coffin for a friend of mine—an unfortunate fellow who's done for himself at last—though he was a jolly dog, too.” Walter looked grave, and said quietly:

“What was his name, Claude?”

"Well, his name was Parkinson. I believe he had a mother who used to live somewhere near that slow place, Mill Town."

"Good God!" said Walter; "why that's the very man I'm in search of, Claude. His boy found his way down to our house to look for his grandmother, and I came up to see if I could gain any tidings of the father!"

"Well, then, you needn't look any more," said Claude, in a surly tone—"and it wasn't a doctor killed him this time, but an accident. I suppose you've heard about those rowdy policemen coming and turning us all out in the middle of our game, the other night! Well, next day, when we were let out of that confounded watch-house, we first went and had a glass of something to keep our spirits up, and then Parkinson went off to the hotel he used to board at, to see if he could find that little pale-faced brat of his, that he always would carry about with him, and during the next day or two he was quite in the dumps because he could hear nothing of him; so last night, I and one or two other fellows got him to come and have a spree, and we made him gloriously drunk—well, a little too much so—for in coming home Parkinson's foot slipped, and he fell with his head on the curb-stone, and never spoke again. So there's the end of it, if you wish to know. I'm sorry for him, myself, for he was a jolly sort of fellow!"

"Oh! Claude, Claude!" said Walter, "how can you talk in that heartless way! To think—oh! only to think, that you should yourself have had, as it were, some share in his death, and then be able to speak of it so lightly!"

"How dare you say that I had any share in his death, sir!" said Claude, his color rising as he spoke; "why, good gracious! I've often got heady myself, but then I never happened to fall on the curb-stone—why, how absurd you are, Walter Grey!"

"Why, Claude!" said Walter, earnestly—"you will allow even to yourself, that this drunkenness was the cause of this unfortunate wretch's death—drunkenness, too, encouraged by *you*, according to your own confession—what is the inference? however, I leave that to your own conscience. Only let me entreat you to take the warning home, and see to what a beastly state the habit of intoxication reduces a man."

"Don't lecture me, sir," said Claude, angrily; "I hate your milksops of men! Now, I dare say you were never drunk in your life!—and let me tell you, I despise you for it—such a tame, sneaking way of living!"

"I should certainly feel greatly ashamed," said Walter, calmly—"if I thought I had ever thus degraded myself. I should be sorry so far to lose all

self-respect as to be capable of doing such a thing. Is there any true heroism in *sin*, Claude? is it not far, far nobler to conquer the evil passions of our nature, than weakly to yield to them? can it be anything worthy of admiration for man, a mere worm, to exalt himself against God, who is all greatness, all goodness, all purity? Oh! believe me, believe me, Claude! that these things only bring misery and unhappiness, and lower you in the eyes of those whose opinion is the best worth having."

"Well!" said Claude, somewhat softened; "I'm not going on in this way always. I intend settling down quite steadily some day or other."

"Believe me, Claude, once more!" said Walter, "that you cannot 'touch pitch and not be defiled'—you cannot indulge in sinful pleasures and be the same man, afterward, as if you had not done so—you may repent, you may be sorry in after years, but oh! you can never be the same. And beside, who can reckon, with any certainty, on having these years of the future to repent in? Look at poor Parkinson—how little did he think last night would be his last!"

Claude made no reply; at last he said—"I say, Grey, don't you mention, at home, about seeing me here—there's a good fellow—they'd be bothering themselves as to how I got acquainted with Parkin-

son; and, perhaps, the less that is said about that the better."

"I won't betray you," said Walter, "only let me beg of you to try and be steadier. Pray, do you know if Mr. Parkinson had anything to leave to his child?"

"Bless you, no, man; why since his mother's death—when he had spent what little money she left—he has just lived by gambling; at one time, perhaps, owning a good bit, and then losing it all again; so I guess you won't gain much if you mean to take care of the child."

"O! never mind," said Walter, "we shall be able to arrange all that, I dare say. Good morning."

When Walter returned to Oakwood, it was decided by himself and Beatrice that little Francis should be adopted as an inmate of their family. To the future they would not selfishly look forward, by thinking whether the child might be a burden and inconvenience to them—their line of duty, for the present, seemed to be to befriend and protect him; and there was something so sweet and winning in the little fellow's looks and ways that they both felt it would be a task of love.

Many people wondered at it; but when will people cease to wonder at one-another's actions? The Greys felt the child to be cast on their sympathy

and love, and richly were they rewarded; but more hereafter of little Francis.

Two or three times during that summer Beatrice received letters from Madame de Tremonille—kind-hearted, affectionate letters—telling of herself and all her doings—of little Blanche, who, she said, had become dearer to her than ever—and of all the friends whom Beatrice had known during her West India sojourn.

And these letters were welcomed by Beatrice with great joy, for their perusal brought back vividly before her mind an epoch in her own life, too strikingly fraught both with sorrow and with joy to be unmarked or unremembered.

CHAPTER XI.

“How many summers, love,
Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
Hast thou been mine?
Look where our children start,
Like sudden spring;
With tongue all sweet and low,
Like a pleasant rhyme,
They tell how much I owe
To thee and thine.”

BARRY CORNWALL'S "POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE."

“We have been friends together, in sunshine and in shade,
Since first beneath the chestnut-tree, in infancy we played;
But coldness dwells within thy heart—a cloud is on thy brow—
We have been friends together—can a light word part us now!”

Four years have rolled away since we took our last peep at Oakwood and its inhabitants. Four years! what changes may not take place in four years; and if we look again at Oakwood, we shall find that Time has wrought some changes there.

Merry voices are heard now on the soft green grass before the house, for little Clement, Beatrice's eldest child, a rosy boy of three summers, is shouting in a game of play with a beautiful but pale-faced

boy of nine or ten — our old friend, little Francis — and baby Mary comes, half-creeping, half-walking along, rattling her coral-and-bells, and screaming with delight at the fun she is too small to understand. Beatrice has grown somewhat more matronly than when we saw her last, but she looks as beautiful and as loving as ever, sitting in that rustic garden-seat with a piece of work in her hands, watching her childrens' sports, and ever and anon laughing as merrily as themselves. But we will follow the doings of herself and her household for awhile.

She was roused at last, by hearing her husband's voice behind her whistling, and holding out his finger to the baby, who toddled to meet him. Seating himself by his wife's side, he said:

"Well, Bee, I have had a hard day's work, and am quite glad to get a quiet rest. How is Hetty now?"

Beatrice's expression changed as she replied: "Well, poor girl, she seems very low-spirited. I'm sure I do not know how to act for the best, Walter. She is up-stairs in her room now, and when she came down, half an hour ago, to fetch something, her eyes looked as though she had been crying a good deal. Dear Hetty! I cannot bear that she should be unhappy; and yet I feel sometimes as if it were better to leave her to herself, and let her think calmly over the matter."

"Dear me," said Walter, sorrowfully, "I could

wish she and Claude Melville had never met! He is so utterly unworthy of her; and yet she, with her trusting, loving, impulsive heart, won't believe it—and that's the worst of it, dear wife—and she so young too! why she's not more than seventeen, is she?"

"She will be eighteen in the autumn," replied Beatrice; "I can't think what there is in Claude Melville to win such love and admiration—he is so unlike Hetty—though he's certainly a handsome man, too—"

"If one could only place the slightest dependence on him," said Walter, in a tone of vexation. "He seems sincere now in his profession of love for Hetty—and what wonder is it that she should win that love, handsome and lovable as she is? But oh dear! Bee, what are Claude's habits!—those of a *roué* at twenty-three: the pity and the wonder is, that *he* should win *her* love—"

"Well, Walter, after all, it is only candid to confess, that Claude can be very amusing and pleasant, when he likes. Why, in spite of all his wildness and follies, he is the life of the house whenever he is at home: there are few people I know, who can make sketches, or sing a song, or entertain a company of friends better than he can—"

"Here's Hetty just coming out on the lawn," said Walter; "do not let us worry her about it

now—let her enjoy a game of play with the children, and then you can speak to her privately on the subject, dear wife—perhaps that will be the best way.”

Hetty came slowly across the lawn: she has grown into a fine and beautiful young woman, since we saw her last! Her face now wore a sad expression, but it brightened when little Clement and Francis welcomed her with a joyous shout, and running up to her, begged her to come and play with them. The evening was closing around them—the light of a soft summer’s day was fast waning in the western sky. Walter went into the house and sat down to read a book in the drawing-room, after the lamp had been lighted; little Francis fetched his accordion, and sat on one of the low window-sills, playing his favorite melodies. The child had a peculiarly accurate ear for music: indeed music was, with him, a passion—it seemed a part of himself—to thrill through his whole being. He could already find out tunes by ear, on Beatrice’s piano-forte, and accompany himself with his sweet, melodious, childish voice. There was something that was perhaps, scarcely appertaining to a boy’s nature in Francis: he was so very gentle, and quiet, and sensitive. He was beloved by the whole household: no one could harm Francis, or have the heart to tease him. The slightest word of

anger, would wound him to the quick, and to Beatrice and Walter, he looked up as to a father and mother; and they truly loved the gentle boy, who was so kind to their little ones, and who repaid their kindness by such unwearied and devoted love. He now sat playing familiar airs, in a kind of dreamy happiness, alone and undisturbed—for Beatrice had gone up-stairs to see her little ones to bed, and Hetty was still walking up and down the garden-path in a kind of melancholy reverie.

The closing darkness had begun to render surrounding objects very indistinct, when Hetty heard a low whistle on the other side of the garden-hedge, which she knew but too well. It was Claude; and gliding softly along, in a moment she was by his side.

“Is that you, my Hetty?” he said; “I hoped you might hear me!—how glad I am you could come, sweet love—”

“Oh! Claude, I am very, very unhappy,” sobbed Hetty, leaning her head against his shoulder.

“Why, what’s the matter, darling? have that bothering old brother and sister of yours been plaguing you?”

“Oh! please, don’t speak of them in that way, Claude—they are so kind; they only wish me to be happy, I’m sure—I’m sure they do—”

“Well then, why do they make this fuss?” asked

Claude, impatiently ; “shall we not be happy together, dear Hetty ? I’m sure no one could love you half as well as I do !”

“I know you love me, dear Claude,” said Hetty, trustfully ;—but when I hear things said against you, I like to hear from yourself, that they are false—of course, I know they must be—”

“What things, dearest—tell me ; what can they find to say against me ?” Hetty hesitated.

“Why, Claude, they have spoken,” said she timidly, as if you were sometimes too fond of drink, and of gambling ; but, you know, I did not believe them ; I only like to tell you about it, that you may know why they do not wish us to see more of each other.”

Claude flinched a little, as he thought of all that Walter Grey knew of his going on, and Beatrice, too, for aught he could tell ; but he said, hurriedly : “Nonsense, dear Hetty ; have you ever seen me tipsy, or betting, or anything of the kind ? You should never believe idle reports without seeing the truth for yourself. Beside,” he added, “if I have done wrong sometimes, dear Hetty, I mean to be very good now ; you are going to make me so, you know.”

“God only can make us good : you must not say that, Claude,” said Hetty, gravely.

"O! I know," said he, carelessly; "I meant that, only I didn't express it. I feel I shall owe you a great deal, Hetty. You know, I have never happened to find a profession to suit me, and if we can manage to stock the farm I was speaking of, with part of your money, why we shall be quite rich, and as happy as the days are long. It will seem like being dependent on my sweet little wife at first, but never mind! we shall do great things yet, and there shall not be such another farm in the whole country as ours. Do not you trust me, dear girl?"

"I do, I do, Claude. I will not mind what is said of you—have I not said I will be yours? Whole worlds could not separate us now—that is, if your love is the same."

"My life! what have I without you?" said Claude, kissing her. "Be firm, love, and all will go right. You know the old saying is,—*"The course of true love never did run smooth."*

"I must go in, now, Claude; I'm afraid I have already lingered too long. Beatrice will be wondering what has become of me. Good-night, dear Claude."

"Good-night, darling, if you must go."

She was at the house in a minute. Oh! what a trusting loving heart that was! yet oh! how mis-

taken in its trust! Sweet Hetty! why close your ears to the voice of warning till it be too late? Why did Hetty color like a guilty thing, when on stepping into the drawing-room she saw both Walter and Beatrice look up at her from where they were quietly sitting, reading and working? Why was it? It was not that she meant to use deception—for she had determined to tell Beatrice of what Claude had said of himself and of her having seen him in the garden. Hetty was impulsive and hasty, but she had a soul above deceit—it had no place in her character—and she looked up to Beatrice as to a mother, although in this instance, perhaps for the first time in her life, she thought her mistaken—mistaken with reference to Claude. Neither her sister nor Walter, however, made any remark to her at the present moment, to her great relief; and she soon after went to bed, pleading a headache as an excuse for retiring early.

Next morning, while they were all sitting at breakfast, a letter came in from New York, from old Mrs. Grey to Beatrice. The latter bit her lip with vexation as she read it; it was a congratulatory letter on the approaching marriage of Claude and Hetty! The old lady said “she had received the news that morning from Laura Melville, and that she was, indeed, surprised to hear it—having received no hint on the subject from either her son or her

daughter-in-law. Laura had enjoined profound secrecy on the subject," she continued, "but that she did not suppose it probable that the injunction should extend to Beatrice, as it was so unlikely that Hetty and Claude should be engaged without her knowledge and consent." Walter looked up in surprise at his wife, as she read the letter, and then turning to Hetty, whose face was crimsoned with blushes, he said almost sternly:—

"Hetty, how could you think of letting Claude speak publicly of your engagement in his own family? Why did matters go so far without your sister and myself knowing it?"

"Oh! Walter, Walter, indeed I had nothing to do with it," said Hetty, bursting into tears. "Claude said one day, that he had told his mother, privately, that we—that we—loved each other, and that she said she was very glad of it; but more than this he promised me not to say to any one. Oh! do not judge harshly of me, dear Walter and Beatrice. I have no secrets from you, I am sure; you know all, and how far everything has been settled."

"Well, don't cry, Hetty," said Walter; "I see how it is. I suppose Mrs. Melville disclosed to Laura what Claude had told her—as a great secret, probably—and Laura, as you might fancy, could not rest with a piece of news to communicate, but must needs write off to New York instant. Oh!

what a pity it is to be such a gossip! But never mind about my mother hearing it—the news will not spread any farther with her—and you know,” he continued, looking earnestly at Hetty, “I do not think matters have gone so far that they cannot be recalled. I’m sure I hope not.”

“Oh! Walter, how can you? I wish you to arrange everything; but we are promised to each other now—I could never, never love any one else. Why should you and Beatrice dislike poor Claude so much?”

“Hetty, why should you judge so wrongly of me?” said her brother-in-law. “Why can you not believe, my dear sister, that I wish all for your good, and that I would not say a word against the marriage, if I thought Claude Melville worthy to be your husband? As to the promise, it would be better to break that now than to take a step you might rue for life.”

“But he is good now, Walter,” said Hetty, bursting afresh into tears; “indeed, indeed he is. You don’t know how steady and persevering he means to be. I know he loves me too well to do anything to annoy me.”

“Sister,” said Beatrice earnestly, “do you really think he has Christian principles? Without these, what reliance can be placed on any one’s conduct? Dear Hetty, how can you be happy together if he does not love God?”

“But he is not careless,” said Hetty warmly; “we have often talked together on serious subjects, and he seems to think just as I do.”

“Acquiescence is not practice,” said Walter, gravely; “I only hope Claude may be all you believe him to be. Do not think me harsh or unkind, Hetty; I only wish you to act cautiously; you have a fond, warm, loving heart, that leads you to believe all things to be as you would wish them. But it is time I went out; I see old Socrates has brought the buggy round, and I have some patients I ought to visit”—so saying, he rose from his chair and kissed Hetty on the forehead as he passed out of the room.

It was little more than a fortnight after the preceding conversation, that Claude and Hetty's engagement was publicly announced. It was with hopeful yet half-mistrustful hearts that Walter and Beatrice gave their consent to the marriage. They feared lest Hetty had decided too hastily; but she had decided, and they could only hope for the best.

Hetty's money, left her by her father, was, as we have seen before, to revert to her own control in case of her marriage. Beatrice had urged her to have a portion of it, at least, settled upon herself; but she refused to do so, saying that it would seem to be doubting Claude.

A very pretty farm had been bought for them by Mr. Melville, only about a mile distant from Oak-

wood, so that Beatrice felt she should still be near her sister to help her in any difficulties and troubles she might encounter on her first commencing house-keeping. A considerable portion of Hetty's money had been laid out in stocking the farm, and all things certainly looked well and promising, and with a little patience and perseverance a comfortable income might be reckoned upon from the produce of the land.

It was on a calm, mild day in the latter end of October, that Claude Melville led his loving, trusting young bride to the altar.

How true it is that a wedding-day is often a very, very sorrowful one! Beatrice felt very much at parting from her sister, for though she would still be near her, her home would be that of another, and their intercourse could not be so unrestrained as formerly.

After the wedding, the young couple passed some time in traveling about, and the cold, dreary days of winter were fast approaching before they got settled at Mow Farm.

It was rather a bad time of the year for Claude to make trial of a quiet country life, but the in-door amusements of reading and music, and chatting with his pretty wife, together with almost daily expeditions either to Springfield or Oakwood, effectually banished monotony. When the early bright days

of spring came, too, there was abundant scope for his energies in directing and superintending the necessary farming operations, the novelty of which made them attractive to him; and he really worked so steadily, and appeared so persevering, that Beatrice and Walter began to hope they had indeed judged too harshly of him.

The summer crept on with its warm, sunny days, and its out-door pleasures; but with it came, too, dark tidings of sickness, spreading slowly but fearfully through the neighborhood. The attacks of the destroying fever were not confined to one or two families, but before July came there were few in the parish who had not to mourn the loss of some relative or friend. Walter Grey shrunk not from his duty as a physician from any fear of personal exposure, but was day and night unremitting in his attention to the sick, uniting, as he always endeavored to do, the spiritual aid of the Christian with the material aid of the physician.

Beatrice's heart often misgave her on her husband's account, and she secretly trembled for his safety, though she was far too noble-minded even to wish him to neglect those placed under his charge for any selfish consideration whatsoever. The disease had not been taken by any of her own household, nor by any one at Mow Farm, so that she was able to see her sister very frequently.

One evening, after tea was over at Oakwood, Walter, tired with the labors of the day, was stretched on a mat near the drawing-room window, playing with his little ones, while Beatrice sat near them working, and little Francis was lying near another window, lost in "Sandford and Merton." Looking up, Walter perceived Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. Melville's steward, riding up to the garden gate. He started to his feet, for the trouble and sickness all around, made him nervous and anxious.

This time his fears were not groundless, Mrs. Melville had been taken suddenly ill, with every symptom of the dreaded fever, and begged him, if possible, to come to her directly, which he did, only just stopping to tell Beatrice what was the matter. Mrs. Melville was a kind, motherly woman, and one who had been very kind to the Greys since they had settled at Oakwood, and Walter felt almost as anxious on her account, as though she had been a near relation. She was a stout, healthy, florid person, too, and he had great fears that it would go hard with her. During the next two or three days, she indeed became alarmingly ill, and Laura was, unfortunately, a most useless nurse. She had not the patience and quiet endurance so necessary for an attendant in a sick-chamber; but when she saw her poor mother tossing in delirium or moaning with pain, she would become hysterical and nervous, and

instead of controlling her feelings, she would yield to them, and claim for herself that attention and sympathy which was so much needed by the suffering invalid. Twice Laura walked over to Oakwood, and Beatrice, from fear of infection, spoke to her from an open window as she stood in the garden below. She could not bear, she said, the restraint of a sick room, it quite overcame her—it was not that she did not feel—O! no, her feelings were only too strong; she wished she could be as calm as others. “Poor Papa does most of the nursing,” she continued; “he is so quiet and so little excitable, and, of course, Mamma likes him to be there.”

“But, dear Laura,” said Beatrice, “you surely cannot think it right to give way to your feelings in this manner; why if every one did so, we should have no one left to nurse us when we were sick; we should all learn to consider others before ourselves. Do you not think, Laura, that even now your poor Papa may be wanting your help; there must be a thousand little things for you to attend to about the house, at such a time as this.”

“O! I don’t know anything about housekeeping, and old Rebecca is always in and out of Mamma’s room,” said Laura, impatiently; “and really, Mrs. Grey, I felt obliged to run down here and speak to you a bit; if I’ve anything on my mind, it does me so much good to tell it to somebody else.”

Beatrice could scarcely forbear smiling — this craving for sympathy formed so essential a part of Laura's character — but she said, gently: "Do, Laura, there's a dear girl, go back and try and content yourself — think quietly and calmly what you ought to do, and forget yourself and your feelings, if you can; you will not mind my saying this to you, dear Laura?"

"O! no," said Laura, "it's very kind of you; only you have no idea how weak my nerves are! the sight of any suffering affects me fifty times more than it would a cold, apathetic sort of person."

"Granted, Laura, perhaps it does — but the path of duty is the same — there may be more obstacles to overcome, but the right line of conduct is equally clear. Good-by, now, for I must go back to the nursery. I hear my little Clement shouting for mamma."

The next day Walter despaired of Mrs. Melville's life, and he dispatched a messenger to Mow Farm, to tell Claude that if he wished to see his mother alive, he must come over to Springfield at once.

Although Claude had, from the first, heard of his mother's illness, he had never been to see her — selfishly fearing the infection, and comforting himself with saying that he felt she would soon be better, and that if she was delirious, what was the use of his going. Hetty was surprised and grieved at her

husband's undutiful conduct, but she could not prevail upon him to change his purpose. His eldest brother, William, had arrived from New York the night before, but up to this time Mrs. Melville had, indeed, been scarcely conscious. This evening, however, the man who brought the pressing message from Walter, said that he believed his Mistress was sensible—as is, indeed, generally the case in similar complaints before the last closing scene.

Claude walked up and down the room in painful uncertainty—he did not set off to see his poor mother, and yet, conscience was pleading too hard to allow of his deciding to stay.

A cloud rested on his brow, and he preserved a moody silence, which Hetty dared not break, though she sat looking at him with tears in her eyes. She feared to irritate her husband, for she had already found out what he was when provoked. At last the door of the room they were in was softly opened, and Susan, the little dairymaid, looked in, and addressing Hetty in a sorrowful voice, said:

“If you please, Ma'am, I wanted to tell you that Bessie Markham, (her, you know, Ma'am, as used to live as nurse-girl with Mrs. Grey) died this morning of the fever. Oh! I feel so bad about it,” said the poor girl, wiping her eyes; “Bessie and me was like sisters—oh! if they'd only told me she was sick, I'd ha' gone to nurse her. It seems so hard

not to have been able to bid her one last good-by." And Susan shut the door gently as she spoke, for she perceived that something was troubling her master and mistress.

"One last good-by! One last good-by!" muttered Claude to himself, and he walked up and down more quickly and uneasily than before; at last he shook himself, as if throwing off some disagreeable burden, and said: "No, no, I wouldn't go, if it were only on your account, Hetty."

"Oh! Claude! Claude! for the love of Heaven don't think of me—trust in God, and go to your poor mother. Beside, if fear for my safety keeps you, you can do as Walter does when he goes home—change your clothes when you come back."

Claude made no reply—he walked up and down still—and at last said, in an angry tone:

"No! I'm not good enough to die; so I tell you I'm not going. Bless me! why I couldn't save her life if I did go. I hate infectious diseases, and I have a presentiment that I shall die if I go; so I'm *not* going, and there's an end of it."

Hetty stole up behind him, and locking both her hands round his arm, and looking up earnestly and tearfully into his face, she said: "Claude, dear husband, you have always been your mother's favorite son—oh! if she should ask for you!"

“Get out of the way, will you!” said he, with a curse, shaking her off him with such force as to send her nearly to the other end of the room; “I’m not going to be plagued by you or any one else, you little fool. Don’t you think I’m the best judge of my own actions?”

Tears streamed from Hetty’s eyes; she made no reply, but went up-stairs to her own room and sat down, leaning her head against the bed.

“Oh! I know, I know,” thought she, “that it is conscience that makes him angry with me. Poor Claude! I’m so sorry for him. I know he loves me, but oh! I wish he would not give way to his temper quite so much!” and she looked at her arm which was slightly cut and bruised from being struck against the edge of a cabinet in the room below, where her husband so roughly repulsed her. “Oh! if not for my sake alone, yet for the sake of—” and she sighed deeply, for she knew that she should shortly become a mother, and that this gave her a double claim on her husband’s sympathy and careful love.

That evening Mrs. Melville died, after having in vain called for her Claude—her darling boy. Oh! why was he not there?

Laura was comparatively calm and quiet—for Walter watched over her like a brother, and per-

suaded her to remain by her dying mother's bedside—and what a consolation it was to her afterward to feel that she had done so! How bitterly Claude's conscience reproached him could only be gathered from his gloomy silence and ill-humor. He forbore all reference to the subject, though he seemed sorry for the way in which he had treated his gentle wife; and she was but too ready to receive his excuses, and still to trust implicitly in his love and kindness toward her.

CHAPTER XII.

“A deep and a mighty shadow
Across my heart is thrown,
Like the cloud on a summer meadow,
Where the thunder-wind hath blown.”

BARRY CORNWALL.

“Wish not, dear friends, my pain away—
Wish me a wise and thankful heart;
With God in all my griefs to stay—
Nor from his lov'd correction start.”—KEBLE.

ALAS! for Beatrice—the loving husband and father at Oakwood was, ere long, himself stretched on the bed of languishing; and although with him the sickness was not to quench the life-spring, yet it brought many, many weary hours of anxious watching. Beatrice's heart bled when she saw the husband of her love tossing in pain and fever; but strength was given her to trust all confidingly to a heavenly Father's love, knowing that all things are in His hands. Her sweet babes were dispatched to Mow Farm, with their nurse, when Walter was first taken ill,—for Beatrice knew that they would there be away from the infection, and that, feeling they were safe

under Hetty's care, she could devote herself without interruption to the care of her sick husband.

Little Francis could not be persuaded to leave her, and cried so bitterly when Beatrice wanted to send him with the other children, that she at last allowed him to remain, only prohibiting his entering the sick room. It was now the gentle boy's daily delight to walk over to the farm and be the bearer back of messages of love and tidings for Beatrice, of the safety of her little ones.

It was wonderful how so young a boy could do so much or be so useful, in a quiet, unpretending way. Before Walter's illness, if the nurse were busy, or went out, Francis could, at all times, be trusted with the charge of little Clement and Mary, playing with them and amusing them by the hour together—or, perhaps, telling them simple stories—all sitting under the shade of a large tree. There was something essentially unobtrusive in Francis' goodness. He would do all sorts of useful things about the house and garden, in such a quiet way, that those unobservant would scarcely notice they were done.

These were now his holidays, for it was now the month of August; but he had, of late, been to a school in the town, as a day-boarder; and there he was a universal favorite both with the master and the boys.

Francis had a noble soul: he applied himself to learning, because he loved it, for its own sake, and because he wished to please Walter and Beatrice; not because he was driven or forced into it—yet music was the ruling passion of his heart. In the summer days, during school-recess, there might often be seen, sitting or lying about in the shade of a large tree in the playground, a group of boys listening to Francis' sweet, childish voice as he sang to them all their favorite ballads; and child though he was, that young, heroic mind would fearlessly rebuke sin, or gently plead with tyranny, and bold, wicked wrong among the boys. Beatrice and Walter rejoiced in their adopted boy, and he was indeed worthy of their love.

September came, and Walter was rapidly recovering his health. Beatrice's little ones had come home, for there was no danger now, and Claude Melville had got a large party of New York bachelor friends down at Mow Farm, for the shooting season; so that Hetty could no longer be burdened with the charge.

Beatrice went over two or three times, to see her sister, when Walter could spare her; but her visits were not very agreeable, for she did not at all like the appearance or manners of Claude's friends. Even Hetty, gentle and uncomplaining as she was, said they were too bold, and coarse, and noisy to suit

her taste at all, and that she feared they were not very good companions for her husband. Beatrice forbore to press her, for she knew how extremely averse Hetty was to saying anything against Claude—anything that might in the slightest degree further prejudice her sister against him—and Claude was still, in general, kind and loving toward his wife; and she treasured up his words and looks of love, as precious jewels, while she cast his misdeeds behind her back. They could not, however, afford to keep many servants at Mow Farm, and the continual presence of these gentlemen-visitors, brought many additional household cares upon her—which her strength was, indeed, unable to bear; but she complained not; she thought it pleased Claude to have them, and she was anxious that all the domestic arrangements should be conducted so as to be a credit to her as his wife.

Beatrice, however, saw with concern that she was overtasking her strength, and one morning, when she had driven over to the farm, and brought her sister back to Oakwood, to spend a quiet hour with herself and Walter, she said:

“Hetty, dear, I think you have too much to do now at home; you ought to take care of yourself—when are those men going to leave?”

“Oh! I don’t know,” she replied, with a gentle sigh; “I don’t like to ask Claude, for he will

think that I want to get rid of his friends. I only wish they would not stop up so late at night—I think that is what tires me so—”

“That is a pity, dearest,” said Beatrice; “how do they amuse themselves?”

“Why,” said Hetty, half hesitating, “they have wine, you know—and they sing songs and tell stories; and generally, about nine o’clock, they begin to play cards. I usually go away early, for they sing queer sorts of things, sometimes, that I don’t like at all—indeed, Claude often makes signs to me to go away, and then I creep up-stairs to bed, and sometimes I lie down and read; but I cannot sleep or feel easy till Claude comes up, and the house is still and quiet. Oh! we were so much happier before these people came.”

Beatrice sighed, but she scarcely knew what to say to comfort her sister.

“Do you see much of Laura, now, dear Bee?” said Hetty.

“Well! I have been over there as often as I could spare the time, lately,” replied Beatrice; “I felt that poor Laura has been greatly in need of sympathy and kindness since her mother’s death, with no sister to help her, or be a companion to her. And she has been very little used to the cares of house-keeping; poor Mrs. Melville was so fond of managing everything herself, that it has spoiled Laura for

taking her place, but I believe she is now really trying in earnest to be practical."

"It may be a good thing for her, poor girl, to have domestic duties to attend to," said Hetty, "it will make her care less about trifling concerns among the neighbors. Laura is a kind-hearted creature, too, though she sometimes quizzes a little."

"Perhaps this has been encouraged in her," said Beatrice; "I do not think she means unkindly. O! by-the-by, dear Hetty, I had a letter from Madame de Tremonille this morning; she says they are all well, and she tells me a good deal of news about our friends there. Mary Gisborne, you know, was married two years ago to the son of a merchant at St. Thomas. He was ordained for a missionary life, a short time ago, and now he and his wife are in the East Indies, laboring in the cause of Christ. You know both the girls became members of Mr. Campbell's church a little while after I left Palm Hill, and they have been a great comfort to Madame de Tremonille as companions. Caroline is still at home, with her father and mother; not less useful, perhaps, than her sister, for Mr. Gisborne employs a good many negroes on his estate, and her mission is among them, attending to their wants both spiritual and temporal, and being her parents' right-hand helper in all home-duties.

“Madame de Tremonille says, that Blanche is growing up a lovely girl; she is fifteen now, and she says she is as tall as herself. Mr. Campbell is still as unweariedly useful, and still a bachelor—indeed, there are sly hints thrown out in the letter, that he is waiting for Blanche. I know, now,” said Beatrice, smiling; “how this plan would delight Isabelle, for she would then get her darling child settled near her; however, time only will show whether her suspicions are correct with respect to the minister’s matrimonial intentions. She does not speak much of herself—but I fear, from what she says, she is not very strong.”

“I am afraid I must go home now, dear Bee,” said Hetty, “I have a good many things to do, and Claude does not like to come home and find me out.”

“Well! then, if you must go, I’ll drive you over, Hetty,” said Walter.

That evening, after the children were all gone to bed, Walter mentioned his fears to his wife that Claude was beginning to neglect the farm, and that by entirely resigning its management into the hands of others, he was getting cheated in every direction.

“To say the truth, dear Bee,” he continued, “I am feeling uncomfortable about Claude on many accounts. When I took Hetty home, this afternoon, he met us at the door, and, early as it was in the

day, he seemed scarcely sober — and he spoke so harshly and crossly to his wife, because she had been out a little while. Poor girl! I saw her color change, and she gave him a sort of look of entreaty as she went into the house. I showed him, by my manner, that I was surprised at his speaking to Hetty in that way, and after a few minutes' further conversation, I ventured to say to him, that I feared Hetty was overtasking her strength, and that his having so many visitors in the house, must cause her a great many additional domestic troubles. He looked rather sulky when I said this, and replied : 'Well! she'll have the house quiet enough soon; my friends are going away the day after to-morrow, and I intend going with them to New York, for a few days.'"

"“Why! you surely wouldn't think of leaving your wife here all alone, would you?” I said. ‘That doesn't seem kind; and your farm, too, will not get along very well with the master out, particularly just now, when all the crops are coming in—’”

"“Oh! bother it! don't talk to me,’ he replied, ‘I'm not going to make myself a slave to my wife or my farm, either. The crops will all be got in safe enough by the men; and Hetty, I dare say, won't miss me much for a week or so.’”

"I told him I was sure she would be far happier if he remained at home; but he did not seem to like

to discuss the subject, so we parted. I had hoped, dear Bee, to have induced him to come here oftener, and also to be more sociable with his father and Laura, for I am sure the society of his old companions is not likely to do him any good."

It was a few mornings after the above conversation. Beatrice was busy, making some arrangements in her store-closet—her two little ones being out in the garden with their nurse—when she heard footsteps in the room behind her, and turning she saw her sister standing there, with tears in her eyes. Beatrice threw her arms round her neck, and kissed her, begging her to tell her what was the matter.

"O! he's gone! Claude is gone to New York, dear Bee. I do feel so lonely and unhappy. He might have stayed with me a little longer! Those horrid men coaxed him away, or I know he wouldn't have gone"—and Hetty leaned her head on Beatrice's shoulder, and wept bitterly. After a time she said:

"It was only the night before last, that he first mentioned to me that he was going, and I begged and prayed him not to leave me, (he never mentioned my going too, wasn't that odd?) and he almost promised me that he would stay at home—but the next day, when he began to tell his friends

that he thought he should change his mind and not go, they laughed at him, and told him he was under 'petticoat government'—wasn't that a shame?—and at last they persuaded the poor fellow to go."

"I feel so very sorry for you, dear Hetty," said her sister, sighing; "I do indeed pity you from the bottom of my heart, but you must only bear up against the trial now, as well as you can. You had better come over and stay with us till Claude comes back. Do—you will not feel so lonely then."

"O, no! I am afraid that would not do at all, dear Bee, else you know how much I should like it. The people at the farm would then have nobody at all left to look after them; and though I cannot do much, yet it would not be right to leave the place quite to itself. I wish so much that you would let Francis come home from school for a week, and stay with me. I do not think Claude can be gone longer than that."

"Certainly, dear, Francis shall come. He gets on so well with his lessons, that a week's holiday will not put him back much. He's a dear fellow, and the most companionable boy I ever saw. I am glad you thought of asking for him, Hetty. If you will stay now, and spend this afternoon with me, when Francis comes home from school in the afternoon, I can soon put up his clothes, and drive you

both back to the farm. Cheer up, dear Hetty; I dare say Claude will soon be back."

But the days wore slowly away, and Claude was not so very soon back, either—one, two, three tedious weeks elapsed, and he came not. Hetty's fond heart sank within her, and she became low-spirited and melancholy. Since Claude had been in New York, he had several times drawn large sums of money from the bank at Hartford, where their little all was deposited; and now these drawings increased alarmingly, and there was little prospect of sufficient being left for the necessary autumn and spring farming operations. Walter was very, very uneasy on Hetty's account. He knew full well that all this profuse expenditure could only be accounted for by Claude's having taken to his old habit of gambling, and he at last determined to write to his father in New York, and beg him to try and find out Claude, and induce him, if possible, to come home immediately. This plan happily proved a successful one—for when the aged minister repaired to the hotel where Claude stayed, and sought and obtained a private interview with him, he pleaded with him so earnestly, and yet so gently and lovingly to return to his young wife and his home, that

Claude, in whom every kindly impulse was not yet dead, determined to set off at once, without daring to trust himself again among his so-called "friends."

The meeting almost overcame poor Hetty. She was too glad to see her husband again to chide him for his long absence; and indeed, Claude, though at times gloomy and reserved, and even refraining from hinting at the cause of his protracted absence, yet seemed, in some measure, touched by Hetty's gentle and devoted affection, and for a time she had no cause of complaint. Indeed, she was one of those happy-minded people who always make the best of everything, and seeing her husband at home and showing toward her something of his former attention and kindness, she thought not of reproaching him for the past, or of needlessly anticipating trouble for the future.

It was November when Claude came back, and merry Christmas was soon with them—that season of the year which, of all others, seems to shed joy and gladness round the domestic hearth. Santa Claus was liberal in his gifts to little Clement, and Mary, and Francis; and at Mow Farm he brought a precious little gift to Hetty and Claude, in the form of a sweet little blue-eyed daughter.

The acquisition of this little treasure seemed, for a time, to melt Claude's heart into renewed kind-

ness toward Hetty ; but as spring advanced, farm-affairs began to worry him—and this because cash was getting short, and he knew that he had brought all the inconvenience upon himself, by his losses at the gambling-table. When a little had been expended in sowing spring-crops, there was scarcely enough left to keep the house ; and Claude began to get into his reserved, gloomy ways again—and alas ! what was worse than all, he would seek more and more, to drown care and thought in drink. This sad habit seemed now to grow upon him, and it filled Hetty's heart with dismay. It was in vain that she remonstrated, wept, and entreated : when the demon of strong drink has taken hold of a man, it is very, very difficult to shake off its fiendish chains. In general, after any particular excess, Claude would show some remorse, and promise to reform—but when the temptation came, he fell.

It was one day in the latter end of April—nature was bursting all afresh into life, and everything in the outer world looked so heart-cheering and lovely, that it seemed more incongruous than ever, for man to lie debased in sin and misery, deaf to the sweet voices around him—and at Mow Farm, the valleys and uplands were green with fresh spring verdure : snow-white lambs were dotted over the pastures ; the tall trees were gently opening their leaves, to afford that shade which would soon be so much

needed, and the sweet spring flowers were merrily lifting up their heads, under every hedgerow.

And yet in the dwelling-house, happiness reigned not; for though Hetty was sitting in the comfortable parlor, with her lovely babe on her knee, tears were fast falling from her eyes, and bedewing its rosy face. Claude was sitting on a chair near the window, lazily rocking backward and forward smoking a cigar, and looking very moody and cross.

"Why, I don't see what good your going away now could possibly do, dear Claude," said his wife gently—

"Well, good, or no good, I won't stop here," said he; "what's the use of it? we've no money, and we can't live on air till the crops are ripe—and there's not much of them either."

"I dare say your father would lend you a little money till the fall, love—and you know we could live very economically and sparingly—there is a little money, too, coming in every week, for milk, and butter and eggs."

"Well, I'm not going to borrow money of my father," said Claude; "I hate to be dependent—and beside I'm tired of this kind of life; I think New York would suit me better; at anyrate, I'll go there, and see if there is anything likely to turn up. I don't think farming is at all in my line after all—it's too monotonous."

“I never feel it monotonous, dear Claude, when we are together ; and then we have so many friends near here—”

“Pshaw ! it’s all very well for a woman ; but I want more excitement. But don’t you worry yourself about me—I’ll be back before long—and you’ve got the baby to amuse you now, too—”

“Oh ! Claude !” said Hetty, and the tears rolled afresh down her cheek as she spoke, “I know baby is a little darling ; but I know, I know I shall be unhappy unless its papa is with me to love it.”

“Nonsense, Hetty—I see I must train you to accustom yourself to be happy without me. I like to come and go as I please. I have a free spirit, and freedom I *will* have.” And saying these words, Claude walked out of the room and banged the door after him.

Oh ! Claude, Claude ! don’t you know that your idea of freedom is but the indulgence of gross selfishness !

The following day Claude started for New York, taking with him nearly all the ready money ; and Hetty was once more left alone at the farm.

Her own little one increased daily in loveliness and strength, and Beatrice’s children often came over to spend a day with their aunt at the farm, which was one of their greatest treats, and a source

of unbounded delight; for though Oakwood was a pretty place to run about in, yet the farm possessed unfailing and boundless attraction, with its cattle, and sheep, and poultry, and beehives, and rabbits, and other delights too many to enumerate. When playing with the little ones, and going excursions with Francis and Clement to favorite nooks and sequestered dells, Hetty would almost, for a time, forget her own anxieties and troubles; but Claude's continued absence lay heavy at her heart. Three weeks slipped away: she heard from him once or twice, but his accounts of himself and his doings were very vague. She wrote to him herself frequently, and strove, by the affection expressed in her letters, and by the accounts she gave of their pleasant home, and their little Violet's growing intelligence, to win him to return. But alas! Claude was among those, the spell of whose presence was more potent than his wife's gentle attractions.

It is true, that when he received Hetty's letters, he would make a resolve within himself to go home immediately; but ere he had carried that resolution into effect, he was enticed away again, by some of his wild companions, into some gay scene of pleasure or dissipation, and home, and those he ought to have loved so dearly, were forgotten.

Laura and Mrs. Melville were very kind to Hetty during her husband's absence, and frequently came

over to see her. The old gentleman placed a sum of money in his daughter-in-law's hands, saying that it was a present for his little grandchild. Hetty understood, and felt the delicacy of the intention—and the help came not inopportunately, for Claude had sent her no means, and there was no money left in the bank. Hetty strove to appear cheerful, but she drooped and drooped, till she became perfectly ill and haggard. She could not but be uneasy about Claude. Old Mr. Grey was away from New York attending some meeting of the Presbytery in one of the Western States, and there was no one to look for her husband and remonstrate with him as before. One evening, however, when Walter and Beatrice had walked over from Oakwood, the former, seeing his sister-in-law's unhappiness, offered to go himself to New York and try to bring Claude home, or at least, to see what he intended to do—for it was impossible to allow matters to go on as they were.

Hetty thanked him, poor thing! with eagerness and warmth; and he set off the following day with many anxious prayers on the part of the anxious wife, whose truant husband he was in search of.

CHAPTER XIII.

“O ! melancholy, linger here awhile !

O ! music, music, breathe despondingly !

O ! echo, echo, from some somber isle

Unknown, lethean, sigh to us—O, sigh !”—KEATS.

“Be still, sad heart ! and cease repining,

Behind the clouds is the sun still shining ;

Thy fate is the common fate of all,

Into each life some rain must fall,

Some days must be dark and dreary.”

LONGFELLOW.

THE shades of evening have fallen thickly around the city of New York, but in the streets the gloom is dispelled by thousands of brilliant lamps. Beneath the light of these lamps, too, thousands are hurrying along—all bent, more or less eagerly, on some purpose, good or bad.

If we turn aside from this bustling throng, and go up that flight of steps on the left-hand side of that small alley, we shall come to a room, the entrance to which is a green baize door, studded with brass nails. Entering this room, we hear the voices of men in angry altercation. Let us not turn aside disgusted, as we well might be, for among those

voices, methinks there are some that strike familiarly on the ear. Let us look in.

“How dare you interfere, sir!” shouted a man, in a loud, angry tone of voice, as he leaned across the table where he and another man had been playing some game of chance. “I say again, sir, who asked you to come and interfere with our game?”

The person whom he addressed, was a tall, gentlemanly, and very prepossessing-looking young man, whose quiet demeanor and gentlemanly bearing, seemed to bespeak him no frequenter of such haunts as that we see him in at present. This was, as our readers may guess, Walter Grey, who now stood with his hand on Claude Melville’s shoulder, earnestly and affectionately entreating him to leave off playing, and come home with him to old Mr. Grey’s house in —— street.

Claude was flushed and excited with play, for he had, this evening, happened to win a considerable sum of money from his opponent—and it was the latter who was now angrily addressing Walter, enraged at the game being interfered with, particularly at the present crisis, when the luck was against him.

“You’re a mean fellow, Melville, to leave off playing just now, after you’ve been winning from

me; at least, give me a chance of winning it back again. Come on!"

Claude hesitated, but Walter turned to the speaker, and said:

"You need not mind about the money, sir, I know Mr. Melville will not think of insisting on its being paid, if you do not think it fair; but he is obliged to leave here now, his presence being positively required elsewhere."

"Well! then, we'll cry quits, Downing," said Claude, who stood by half angry, and half ashamed; but yet, for the time, so much under Walter's influence as to rely upon him for assistance and advice.

"Indeed, I'll do no such thing!" said the other man, angrily; "fair play's fair play. Come on now, and let's have it out—O! you won't, won't you!" said he, in tones of increasing anger, as he saw Walter take Claude's arm to lead him away; "then, I can tell you, that I think you're a couple of mean sneaks, and that it's all a plot, your going away at all. Take that for your pains!" and firing a revolver as he spoke, the report of the piece sounded through the gambling-saloon.

Walter fell forward, though the shot had been intended for Claude.

The ball had entered below the right shoulder and passed out between the ribs. Claude gave a cry of horror and agony, and threw himself on his

knees by his brother-in-law, deadly pale. A crowd soon collected round them, and the wounded man was gently carried on a litter to his father's house.

Claude saw him to the door, and then ran as quickly as possible for a surgeon, whom he dispatched to attend on the patient, and then slunk away himself, ashamed to be seen by any one he knew, for he felt that he had, though inadvertently, it is true, been the cause of the accident. As we have before said, old Mr. Grey was from home. The agonizing terror and fear of his poor wife, when she saw her only son brought to her door, late at night, desperately wounded, and escorted only by a low mob, may better be imagined than described. She knew, however, that Walter had been in search of Claude Melville, and she intuitively suspected that the accident had some connection with him.

From the men who carried him, however, she could learn nothing but a very confused account; and indeed there was not much time for delay—the care of the sufferer claiming her attention too entirely to admit of further inquiry.

Walter had swooned as they were bringing him along the street, and it was not till after he had been laid on his mother's bed, and the surgeon had arrived, that he recovered his consciousness.

The surgeon gave it as his opinion that there was no immediate danger to be apprehended from the

wound, but old Mrs. Grey resolved on instantly dispatching a messenger for Beatrice, telling her that her husband had met with an accident, but that she must not frighten herself unnecessarily, for that indeed there seemed no cause for alarm. No mention was made of Claude Melville in the note, for of him Mrs. Grey knew nothing.

When did a loving wife, in spite of all warnings to the contrary, ever receive tidings of an accident having happened to a beloved husband, without magnifying the danger to the utmost in her own mind, and without being ready to believe the worst from the earliest moment? Beatrice nearly fainted when she first received the note. She fancied she should never again see Walter alive, but grief deprived her not of the power of action, and with a death-like pallor on her countenance, she moved around the house to give the necessary orders previous to her departure for New York.

She at first concluded not to let Hetty know what she had heard, but considering, afterward, that her sister would be sure to find out she was from home, she dispatched Francis to the farm with a note, stating what she had heard from her mother-in-law, and begging Hetty to come over to Oakwood as often as she could, so as to keep an eye on the children and household.

When Beatrice arrived in New York, Walter was

already considerably better; and although yet exceedingly weak, it was not many days before he was able to be moved, by easy stages, to his own home. Of Claude, however, alas! no news could be gained before they left, and Beatrice, unhappy though she was about her own husband, was not unmindful of her sister's trouble, and really dreaded meeting her on their return, without having some tidings to communicate respecting Claude.

O! with what a death-like, agonized expression of countenance did poor Hetty receive her sister and Walter, as she stood in the hall at Oakwood awaiting their arrival. Too much overcome to speak, or even to weep, she stood clasping her baby in her arms, with her lips parted, as if in mute supplication, and yet not daring to venture an inquiry. She remained thus, intently gazing, while Socrates and another servant lifted Walter from the carriage and bore him gently up-stairs. She could only press Beatrice's hand, and say, in an agonized whisper:

"O! Bee, Bee, do tell me, for mercy's sake, where Claude is? O! my husband, my husband."

"I know not, dear Hetty, I know not—would to God I did," was her sister's reply.

"Once more, dear Bee, only tell me *he* did not do this; only tell me *he* did not!"

"No, indeed, dear Hetty, Walter says this was an accident," said Beatrice; "do not, dear sister,

distress yourself thus. Walter is thought to be out of danger, and I dare say Claude will soon be home, for Walter saw him, and told him how anxious you were for his coming."

Hetty sank down on a chair. She breathed more freely, and refreshing tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Do not delay here, dear Bee, I am better now, thank God; but oh! to think that I should have been the cause of Walter's going. Yet I am so thankful to learn that it was not Claude who hurt him. O! I long to hear all about it from him, when he is strong enough to tell me."

Beatrice again kissed her sister, and then ran upstairs to her sick husband, who, indeed, now claimed all her care and attention.

Poor Hetty felt that she could delay no longer at Oakwood, for might not Claude return at any moment?

As she went along, under the green hedgerows and through the meadows, toward the farm, the summer air blew sweetly and pleasantly upon her, and her little Violet was smiling and cooing in her arms: but what a heavy heart had that young mother! what would she not have given to know where her husband was? Why was he not with her to enjoy this pleasant summer's eve?—oh, why!

She thought the rooms at home looked even more desolate than usual, that evening; and she felt

quite oppressed with a sense of utter loneliness. How many things about the homestead looked as if they wanted setting in order—and she had no money to pay for the necessary labor. The two or three farm-servants who had been kept on, answered her, she thought, less respectfully than usual now, and she fancied it was because they knew she was poor. Having undressed her little one, and put her to sleep, for she had been obliged to dismiss her nurse, (the wages being an expense she was quite unable to meet) she fetched a candle and sat down in her room by little Violet's cot, and opened her Bible to read. The first words which met her eyes were these: "Thou art our refuge and strength, a *very present help in time of trouble.*" Oh! sweet and blessed promise for the afflicted! Tears came into Hetty's eyes as she read them, and kneeling down, she prayed, oh! how earnestly, that the Lord would indeed be her help in this her trouble, and grant that she might receive some tidings of him whom she still loved so fondly.

Scarcely had she risen from her knees, when she heard horse's hoofs rattling up the road to the house. Is it? can it be Claude! thought she; and as the idea thrilled through her, it almost deprived her of the power of action—she was so afraid lest it might not indeed be he.

Another minute, and there was a quick knock at the door. She rushed down the stairs, for she would not that any one else should be the first to receive him, if it were indeed Claude.

In another moment, she was in her husband's arms.

"Oh! Claude, Claude! how could you stay from me so long? Thank God you're come at last!" was all she could utter.

"Oh wife!—oh Hetty!—I'm a miserable man; I don't deserve to be welcomed in this manner—"

Another kiss was his wife's only reply, and then taking him by the hand, she led him gently upstairs, to the room where their sleeping infant lay.

Claude stooped down and kissed little Violet, and a shade passed over his countenance, and his conscience twinged sharply as he did so, for he felt what an attraction home ought to have been to him.

Hetty now lit another candle, and then only did she observe how very miserable her husband's appearance was.

He looked haggard and thin, and his hand shook from the effects of the intemperate life he had been leading. He looked ten years older than when she saw him last!

Turning now to his wife, and looking her earnestly in the face, Claude said:

“Hetty, if you’ve any pity for me, only tell me good news of Walter. What of him? Is he alive yet?—for God’s sake don’t tell me he’s not!”

“He is! he is! dear Claude; Beatrice says he is much better: he came down from New York to Oakwood, this afternoon—and surely if he had been so very ill, he could not have been moved.”

“I did not do it, Hetty—I did not do it,” said Claude, in a tone of misery, as he sat down on a chair, and covered his face with his hands; “God knows I wouldn’t have injured a hair of his head!—it was that rascal Downing.” Oh! that I had never met him! “I shall never be able to look Beatrice in the face again—she will think all was my fault—”

“O! indeed, indeed, Claude! you do my sister injustice. I am sure she is the very last person to harbor you any ill-will; so pray do not think that!”

“O! what an unhappy brute I am!” groaned Claude, “I wish I’d never left home. You don’t know what I’ve suffered during the last two or three days, thinking that Walter might be dead! I have been an infatuated, foolish wretch!”

“Dear husband, you are at home now—let us forget the past. I am sure *I* will never reproach you with it—and they all—your father, and Laura, and Walter, too, will be so glad to hear you are come!”

"Well! then, I'm determined they shan't know it yet," said Claude, almost fiercely; "I am not in the humor to brook reproaches from any one — my own are as much as I can bear! Don't you say a word about my being here till I tell you. I'm not well, and I want to stop quietly with you; and I'm not going to be plagued with visits from any one."

"My poor, poor Claude!" said Hetty, and leaning over her husband, from behind his chair, she laid her hand on his head and kissed his forehead — a tear falling from her eye and dropping on to his cheek as she did so.

Claude started — "Hetty, don't cry! I can't bear it — indeed I can't! I'm not good enough to be loved by you! I feel I am not!"

"Claude, love! do not talk so — nothing can change my love — you are always my own dear husband!"

"God forgive me, wife, for all my unkindness toward you — oh! how undeserved has it been!"

CHAPTER XIV.

“At every motion of our breath,
Life trembles on the brink of death;
A taper’s flame, that upward turns,
While downward to the dust it burns.”

MONTGOMERY.

“Affliction then is ours,
We are the trees whom shaking fastens more;
While blust’ring winds destroy the wanton bowers,
And ruffle all their curious knots and store.
My God! so temper joy and woe,
That thy bright beams may tame thy bow.”

GEORGE HERBERT.

It was with a comparatively light heart, that Hetty descended the staircase the following morning, leaving Claude, wearied with want of rest, lying fast asleep. Happy she could not exactly be, for he looked both ill and wretched, and she was anxious, too, about Walter; but yet, thankfulness for her husband’s return, was her predominant feeling, and with her usual sanguineness of disposition, the hope of bright future days flitted through her mind.

It was not very early—much later, indeed, than her usual hour of rising; but Claude looked so worn out, that she had feared disturbing him earlier

Having now dressed little Violet in another room, she came softly down stairs, and depositing her little charge on a large, soft mat in the breakfast-room, she began to arrange cups and saucers, and make other preparations for the morning meal.

While she was thus engaged, Susan, the dairy-maid, came into the room and said: "If you please, Ma'am, Mrs. Grey's cook was over this morning afore seven o'clock for them three pounds of butter we promised her. She said she heard that Mr. Grey was mighty weak to-day; that he hadn't slept very well last night. I told her as how Mr. Melville came home last night, tho' I didn't know that myself till this morning, when old Dennis told me that Mr. Melville left the horse with him at the stable."

It's of no use Claude's thinking to hide his having come home then, thought Hetty; I hope he will not be angry, at anyrate it cannot be helped.

It was about noon the same day—the first day of Claude's return—when two figures, those of an elderly lady and a little boy, were seen approaching the farm.

Hetty was standing at the window with Claude, when she suddenly exclaimed:

"Why, Claude, that looks very much like Aunt Louisa coming up the hill with little Clement! why where can she have sprung from?"

"Wherever it may be, I shan't stay to encounter her," said Claude; "make any excuse you like for me, Hetty. A lecture from her is what I never could stand in my best days." So saying, he went quickly up-stairs, and locked himself into his room.

It was indeed Mrs. Grant, who had arrived from New York only that morning. She had heard of Walter's accident from his mother, and she had immediately set off for Oakwood, to see if she could be of any service to Beatrice in the nursing line.

Though still occasionally somewhat caustic and severe, time had blunted some of the sharp edges in her character, and she could really be a most useful person when she chose. She had taken a great fancy to Beatrice's little ones, who, she said, were almost the only well brought up children she knew; so that now her appearance at Oakwood was hailed by Beatrice with pleasure, for she knew that Aunt Louisa might safely be intrusted with nursery cares, and Walter was now so ill as to claim all her own time and attention.

The tidings of Claude's arrival, conveyed to Oakwood by the cook that morning, had filled both Beatrice and her husband with thankfulness, and Aunt Louisa had not been long in the house before Beatrice begged her to go over to the farm, and bring some tidings both of Claude and Hetty.

"Well, Hetty, love, so you see I've come down to

take care of you all," exclaimed Mrs. Grant, as she entered the room. "Such doings! dear me, dear me!"

"I am sure dear Bee must be very glad to see you, Aunt," said Hetty, kissing her affectionately; "poor thing! this is indeed a trial for her. Clement, love, come and kiss Aunt Hetty! There, sit on my knee; there's room for you now, for little Violet is fast asleep."

"Where's uncle Claude, Aunt? Mamma said he was come home! You won't be unhappy any more now, will you?"

Hetty kissed the little fellow's rosy cheek, and said, in a hesitating voice, (for she felt that her aunt's eyes were fixed upon her):

"Uncle Claude is not very well to-day, Clemmy; he is up-stairs, but you shall see him another time. Suppose you go out and feed the rabbits? you may if you like; and ask Susan to gather you some lettuce—I think she is in the kitchen."

"Do tell me what you think of Walter, Aunt?" said Hetty, when Clement had left the room; "we did not hear a very good account of him this morning?"

"Well, it's my opinion that he won't be well for a long time," said Mrs. Grant, shortly; "no wonder, poor fellow! with that wound it's a mercy his life was spared."

"It is indeed, Aunt, we have all great cause for thankfulness," said Hetty, gently.

“Pray, why does your husband shut himself up, and not come down to see me? I came over here on purpose to see how you both were, and it will seem very queer, when I go back, to say that I have not seen Claude.”

“I am afraid you must excuse him, Aunt. I am very sorry; poor fellow! he has been greatly cut up about that affair of poor dear Walter’s getting hurt.”

“*Poor fellow*, indeed! I’m sure I don’t pity him; what business had he to be away at all? The way he’s been going on lately, I’m sure, he deserves to be worried, and well punished too.”

“Please, please, Aunt, don’t speak in that way,” said Hetty, in a tone of distress; “we cannot recall the past, and I cannot bear to hear any one talk against him. I feel too glad to have him safe home again.”

“Ah! indeed!” said her aunt, shaking her head, “little comfort he’s been to you. He ought to be ashamed of himself, that’s what I know. But you knew what he was before you married him, child, so you’ve brought it on yourself.”

“Aunt Louisa!” said Hetty, and she colored with anger as she spoke, “I must request of you not to speak in that way. I won’t listen to it! Whatever Claude may have been, or whatever he has done, he is my husband, whom I dearly love; and

I will suffer no one to abuse him before my face ;
“and she rose as she spoke, and walked over to the cot to take up her baby, who was now awake.”

“Well, well, child ! come, don’t be offended. I only told you what I thought ; and if you don’t like to hear it, why we’ll change the subject : here at least, is something we can agree about,” and Mrs. Grant held out her arms for little Violet to come to her. “What a lovely baby ; why it’s not much like you, Hetty ; it’s more like what Beatrice was when a child : like your mother indeed : yes, she’s the image of your poor mother—the same soft gray-blue eyes—”

“I’m so glad of that,” said Hetty ; “and I should wish her to be as like dear Bee as possible ; I only hope she may be as good. She is a little darling now, and a great amusement to me—”

“By-the-by, my dear,” said her aunt, “I hear Laura Melville is going to be married ; to whom is it ?”

“To a friend of her brother William’s,” replied Hetty ; “another New York barrister—a Mr. Herbert. I met him at Springfield once or twice, last year, and again about three months ago ; he seemed a gentlemanly, well-informed man, but I have not seen much of him. Indeed, what I have heard about him, has been principally from Laura, who often comes over here to sit with me in the

morning, when her father is busy in his library or overlooking the estate—”

“How do Laura and her father get on together, now?”

“Oh! very well indeed; she has become his constant companion since her poor mother’s death, and it seems her principal aim to make him happy, and to endeavor to compensate, as much as possible, for the great loss he has sustained. He will miss her sadly, poor man: I really can hardly think what he will do without her, when she is married. Laura is not comfortable about it herself, and the wedding has, in consequence, been indefinitely postponed, till some plan can be decided upon. Old Mrs. Grey, (Walter’s mother, you know), is a relation of theirs; and she has a widowed sister, who will probably stay with him part of the time; but, I believe, nothing is settled yet. Let me take baby, Aunt; she is too heavy for you.”

“Not at all, my dear; but let us go into the garden, and look for Clement; I must be going back to Oakwood, for Beatrice may want me. How ever are you going to manage about this farm, Hetty?” continued Mrs. Grant, as they went down the path leading to the rabbit-hutches; “why it looks shamefully neglected, and the garden is one mass of weeds!”

Hetty winced, but replied:

“I cannot tell, indeed, Aunt; I hope everything will be set to rights, now Claude is come—”

“Tut! set to rights, indeed,” muttered Mrs. Grant; “they ought never to have got in this state. Well, well, my dear, I know the state of things, as well as you can tell me. Look here now, Hetty, I thought this hundred dollars might be useful to you just now, so I brought it as a little present from me, if you will accept it. Come now, you must not refuse me. Of what use is it to an old woman like me! Beside, my dear, if you began asking for money just now, for household necessities, who knows but what that—that—but that Claude might be off to New York again.”

“Aunt Louisa,” said Hetty, as she threw her arms round her neck, and kissed her warmly, “this is indeed, kind and thoughtful of you. I shall make no scruples of false delicacy in accepting it. God bless you, Aunt—‘a friend in need is a friend indeed.’”

It was not that Walter Grey was very ill—no, not *very* ill; that is to say, there were no symptoms which might cause alarm, even in the breast of an anxious wife; but it was long, very long, before he regained his health and strength, and many weeks elapsed before the happy evening when, he was

able to walk round the garden, leaning on Beatrice's arm, with his children running around him in merry glee, delighted at seeing dear Papa out again.

As the hot sun, however, abated somewhat of the intensity of its rays, and the pleasant soft days of autumn began to appear, his strength came back, slowly but surely, although it was long before he was otherwise than an invalid.

During Walter's illness, another doctor had settled in Mill Town, and although, even now, there were some among his old patients, who came to Oakwood occasionally to consult him, yet it was impossible that his old practice could be kept up. He and Beatrice were not poor, for his profession had hitherto been quite sufficient for the support of the family; and, with the exception of a small sum expended on their first commencing housekeeping, Beatrice's fortune remained almost untouched in the bank at New York, where it had been lodged by her father, and the accumulated interest during the five years of their marriage, had increased this little capital considerably. It is true that, at several different times, Beatrice had, from her own resources, assisted Hetty during the past year, when in distress, while Claude was in New York; but it was but very trifling sums that Hetty could be prevailed upon to accept, for it was very galling to her,

remembering her sister's advice at the time of her marriage, to feel that she was now in any way dependent on her.

It seemed, indeed, as though poor Hetty's life were to be cloudy in its morning—we can only hope that its noonday and eve will be less shadowy. Claude had become quite disgusted with the aspect of affairs at the farm. He was too much of a fine gentleman, and had far too little energy, to set manfully to work and make the best of existing circumstances. Difficulties, which to some minds would have appeared mere trifles, completely floored him. He threatened to give up the whole concern altogether, and it was only his father's advice, and his wife's urgent entreaty, which induced him to hold on a little longer. It was some time after he returned home, before he would go to Oakwood to see Walter and Beatrice—but we need not say that he was kindly received—that he was sure to be, if but for his wife's sake alone.

It was one autumn morning, or perhaps, we could scarcely have called it autumn—it was more, the last sweet leave-taking of summer—one of those lovely September days when, without having lost the freshness of summer, the landscape seemed almost unconsciously and imperceptibly to remind one of the coming fall. A light gray mist hung over the rich valley, in which lay Oakwood—the

farm, and Springfield—such a mist as only to promise a bright and glorious noon, and serving but to lend new beauties to the scene.

Tired as Claude was with the minutiae and drudging of a farm life, yet this lovely morning offered him plenty of attractions in the sporting way, for he was a good shot, and there was nothing he liked better than to ramble over the farm with his gun in his hand, with his favorite dog, Hector.

Hetty was to go over to Oakwood, and spend the day with her sister; glad, indeed, to have this opportunity of a quiet chat with her; and Claude was to come there to supper at six, after his day's sport, and take her and little Violet home.

Walter was, of course, at home; he was too much of an invalid to walk about, and he now spent a great deal of time in reading—for Beatrice was necessarily a good deal occupied with the children, and Clement was now old enough to have regular lessons every morning. Aunt Louisa had returned to New York some time before, and Beatrice was really sorry to part with her, she had been so kind and useful during Walter's illness—but the good lady had peculiar ideas about not out-staying her welcome, and she could not be prevailed upon to remain longer.

Laura Melville came in, in the course of the morning, and as the day was so fine and warm, she and

Beatrice, and Hetty took their work and sat under a large tree in the garden, chatting merrily and happily together, while the children played on the mossy lawn beside them. When Francis came home from school, at four o'clock, they all set off for a pleasant walk to Springfield, to see if Mr. Melville could not be prevailed upon to come back with them to supper at Oakwood.

It was about two hours after this that they were again all assembled on the lawn, waiting for the absent sportsman. They were to have a substantial meal, a sort of union of tea and supper, as Claude had not been home to dinner. Six o'clock was the appointed time for meeting, and it was now half-past, and it was already getting quite dusk, for the shortening days bespoke the coming fall. At last they settled to wait no longer—that something must have delayed Claude, and that he would come in before they had finished; he was a very uncertain person in his movements at all times, so that his not being punctual caused them no great uneasiness. But before seven o'clock Hetty began to get fidgety, and to go uneasily backward and forward from the dining-room to the hall door, to listen for his footsteps. But no! no sound disturbed the evening air; all was still and silent as death. Half-past seven—a quarter to eight! She could bear it no longer, and Beatrice and her husband and Mr. Melville, all began

to feel anxious too; but they thought that Claude must have become too tired, or that he had got wet in some swampy ground and gone home; still it was strange that he sent no message to Hetty.

“If he does not come before ten minutes,” said old Mr. Melville, “I shall start for the farm myself and see what has become of him.”

But before ten minutes had elapsed there came a loud ring at the front-door bell. The color left Hetty’s face, for she knew Claude would have walked in without ringing. In another moment Socrates came to the door and told Walter that some one wished to speak with him. Hetty gave a sigh of hope and relief, for she thought that very likely it might be only some one come to Walter for medical advice.

When Walter Grey went out into the hall, he saw old Dennis, the servant at the farm, standing looking rather frightened and uneasy—but with his finger on his lips as though to enjoin silence.

“If ye please, sir,” said he, in a whisper, “is the master here?”

“No, indeed, Dennis; we have been expecting him these two hours. He was to have come to take Mrs. Melville home after he had done shooting.”

“Faith and then, yer honor, I’m afeard intirely there’s something amiss. About an hour ago—just at dusk—Hector came home, looking quite oneasy

like; and he would not go into his kennel for a long time, but lay down and howled and howled, and seemed as if he wanted us to foller him somewheres, the crathur! Me and the t'others was quite scared intirely, and I thought may-be I'd better come over here and see if the master was here or no."

Walter listened breathlessly to Dennis' words. Something surely must have happened to Claude or the dog would not have gone home alone. He scarcely knew what to do; but he at last put his head in at the dining-room door and called old Mr. Melville out, that he might consult with him.

Hetty's fears were now thoroughly aroused. What could Walter want with her father-in-law unless something were the matter with Claude? Quick as thought she rushed into the hall, and seizing Walter's arm, she said:

"Oh! Walter, Walter! for heaven's sake tell me what's the matter! Has Dennis brought any news of Claude?"

"No, indeed, ma'am," said the old man; "only Hector's come home, and I thought may-be the master might ha' got into some fix somewheres on the farm; anyhow we had best go and see, I take it."

Hetty gave a suppressed scream, and turned deadly pale. "Yes, yes," she gasped, "we will go and look for him."

"My dear child," said old Mr. Melville, tenderly, "you cannot possibly come with us; see how dark the night is, and we may have miles to walk. Control yourself and stay with Beatrice. Do, for your child's sake. God help you and comfort you. Come, Walter, let's be off—I'm ready; but dear me, how are you to walk? you are too weak to go far."

"The horse will be saddled in a minute—I must go," replied Walter. "Tell Socrates to come too, Dennis, and to bring a lantern with him. By-the-by, did you hear your master say, this morning, what part of the farm he was going to shoot over?"

"Never a one o' me knows nothing at all about it, sir, except that when he started he set off on the road toward Beechwood, right a' top o' the hill."

"Let us go to the farm and fetch Hector first," said old Mr. Melville; "he will be sure to lead us in the right way to where he left his master—a dog's sagacity can always be trusted in these matters."

They accordingly set off—Walter riding slowly on horseback, while the others walked by his side. As they neared the farm, they could hear the long, deep, melancholy howl of Hector, filling the night-air with its mournful sounds.

"Ah! sirs," said old Dennis, sighing; "sure an' when a dog howls like o' that, there'll be a death in the family. I always heerd that ever since I was a little spalpeen o' a boy."

Walter and Mr. Melville answered not. They were, themselves, filled with gloomy forebodings — and little as they might, in a calmer hour, give credence to old Dennis' superstition, yet certain it is that the dismal sounds increased the vague terror of impending evil which filled their minds.

To unloose Hector was but the work of a moment, and the faithful animal seemed as though he understood wherefore they had fetched him, for with a low, sharp whine, he seized the skirt of Mr. Melville's coat, then walked off in a northerly direction, then returned, and again seizing the coat, he seemed, by these mute gestures, to invite them to follow him.

Straight on, in a north-easterly direction, quite away from both Oakwood and Springfield, did Hector pursue the track of his master's footsteps. Oh! how gloomy and melancholy it was! It was not a cold night, but the wind had changed, and it now came sighing and breathing mournfully through the tall trees, while a few drops of rain falling now and again, threatened a shower.

It was dark, too, for the heavens had become overspread with clouds, and it was with difficulty that Hector's spotted black and white form could be descried as he ran on before them — only stopping ever and anon to see if they were following. On, on, on, for nearly two miles, did they walk in gloomy

silence, hoping every moment that the dog would stop, and yet having an almost undefined dread of his doing so, lest their worst fears should be realized.

It was in a quiet, shady glen, underneath a large tree, that Hector suddenly stopped short, and after smelling around him, he gave one long, piercing howl, and crouched down on the ground beside some object which lay there.

Walter dismounted in an instant, and seizing the lantern from Socrates, he hurriedly approached the spot. Oh! what a sight met his eye; it blanched his cheek with terror, and made his hand tremble as he gazed. There lay poor Claude, cold and dead, with his gun by his side, and a fearful wound in his head.

Mr. Melville gave a cry of horror and agony, and threw himself on his knees beside the corpse, exclaiming:

“Oh! my son, my son!”

“Oh! Hetty, poor, poor girl! How will she bear this?” groaned Walter.

At that moment a flash of lightning shot through the branches of the trees, and illumined, for an instant, the face of the dead.

His ramrod lay by his side, and it was evident from the position in which he was found, and from the direction the shot had taken, shattering his jaw,

and going upward to the temple, that it was in charging his gun, while one barrel was loaded, that the accident had occurred.

Walter was too weak to be able to assist in carrying poor Claude's remains, and Socrates and Dennis were both old men and feeble, so he resolved to ride on to a cottage, distant only about a quarter of a mile from the spot, and endeavor to procure help.

It was not very long before he returned with two men, who had taken a door off its hinges and kindly volunteered to carry the body.

Gloomily and sadly that little procession wended its way to the farm.

The poor father walked last, his head bowed down with grief, and his arms folded, heedless of the rain which now pelted pitilessly against them; and, indeed, of aught save the lifeless form of his once handsome boy. The light of a candle was seen in the kitchen window as they approached the house, for the two women-servants, Susan and old Jane, were sitting up in a state of great fear and alarm, awaiting the return of some members of the household.

Walter rode on to prepare them for what was coming. Susan screamed and fainted, but Jane, although trembling in every limb, yet retained sufficient command of herself to go along the passage to the front-door with Walter, and then light the

men up-stairs, where they deposited poor Claude's lifeless form on the bed.

Ah! little did poor Hetty think, when she rose that morning, what it was that would that night be laid there, so cold, and stiff, and inanimate.

Leaving old Dennis at the farm, and bidding old Jane do what was necessary toward washing and dressing the corpse, Walter and Mr. Melville proceeded toward Oakwood, endeavoring to think how they might best break the news to the poor young wife.

Such grief as this is too deep, too tender, and sacred to be described. What such a loss must be, coming so suddenly and unexpectedly, can better be imagined than recorded. Poor Hetty! it was, indeed, a blow — sharp and lacerating to her tender heart.

She went over to the farm with Walter, in the buggy next morning, at her own request, that she might gaze once more on the face of him who had been so dear, and then returned to Oakwood, that she might be with her sister — and it was many, many days before she could trust herself to re-enter the walls of her old home again, where everything so painfully reminded her of her loss.

CHAPTER XV.

Farewell! and may friendship, affection and love,
Surround thee through life with their holiest flowers;
And the peace that can only descend from above,
Shed its sunshine around thee, and hallow thy hours!

FOUR years have again rolled away! and when we turn to look at our friends we shall see that with them time has also wrought its accustomed changes.

In the rooms of the house at Oakwood fresh faces were seen, for Walter Grey and his family had long since left, and were now all residing at Mow Farm.

The long sickness which ensued after Walter was wounded in New York, had determined him on retiring from the more active duties of his profession, and living a quiet life in the country. Just at this time, as we have seen, came poor Claude Melville's sad death, and as his young widow was not able to undertake the management of the farm, even if she had had the means to do so, Walter and Beatrice resolved on taking it off her hands, and accordingly purchased the place within three or four months of the time of the accident.

Laura Melville was married a few days before they

removed, and poor Hetty, with her little daughter, went to live with her father-in-law, at his own urgent request.

At the time we are now speaking of, little Violet had grown into a lovely child of three years old; and she might often be seen wandering about the garden and meadows of Springfield for hours together, with her grandfather, to whom she was devotedly attached—for what would not dear grandpapa, kind grandpapa do for her? Ah! anything indeed: for the old man seemed almost to worship the ground his sweet blue-eyed Violet trod on.

Time had somewhat softened the intensity of Hetty's grief, and though her wild exuberance of spirits was gone forever, she was calm and cheerful. She was always busy, too. She had her little daughter's education to attend to, and she superintended all Mr. Melville's domestic arrangements, presiding at Springfield as mistress of the house. Then she was her father-in-law's constant companion during his leisure hours—playing and reading to him, walking with him, and endeavoring, in every possible way, to render him as happy as she could.

Very often they had friends staying with them—Laura and her husband generally came down two or three times in the year; and William Melville, who had been married some two years before, was

never long without paying them a visit. Aunt Louisa, too, always came in the summer, and spent a month with each of her nieces, so that Hetty and Mr. Melville were never long by themselves.

It was so pleasant, too, for Hetty to have her sister living so near. To go to Mow Farm was always a pleasant walk for herself and Violet, and she knew that in Beatrice she had a friend in whom she could always confide, and to whom she could look up for counsel and advice.

Now, however, Walter and Beatrice were not alone, for they were entertaining, at their house, some very old friends — friends whom we have not seen for many years. They consisted of a young minister and his wife, and a widow lady in very delicate health.

Let us look back awhile into the past. Madame de Tremonille's expectations and hopes with regard to her dear child, Blanche, had ere this been realized, and about two months before the time we are speaking of, she had seen her united to Mr. Campbell. It was as good a match, in every way, as she could have desired, for they seemed indeed thoroughly suited to each other, and to be such as would go heart and hand together through life's journey.

Madame de Tremonille had been the more anxious for this union to take place in consequence of her own declining health : for how could she bear

to leave her dear child without a protector? Her own estate of Palm Hill she had already bequeathed to her, and it was agreed that, even should her life be spared, Blanche and her husband should live with her, and make it their home.

The heat of the climate had gradually undermined her English constitution, and the physicians imperatively ordering a colder climate, she was induced to accept her friend Beatrice Grey's oft-repeated invitation, and come to pass a few months with her in America. Hither she had been accompanied by Mr. Campbell and Blanche, for they were unwilling for her to travel so long a distance alone, and in so precarious a state of health. Beside, Mr. Campbell had previously arranged with a brother minister to take his place for a few weeks, that he and Blanche might be able to take a little trip after their marriage, so that it was no inconvenience for him to leave his charge.

Here, then, we find them all at Mow Farm, walking up and down the garden with Beatrice and Walter. Oh! what a long time it seemed since they had met—nine years!! What changes had taken place! and how many, many events had occurred! Madame de Tremonille was delighted to see Beatrice again, and she could never sufficiently admire her lovely children, of whom there were now four.

Both Beatrice and Hetty said they should not have recognized Blanche at all; they had seen her last a little slim child of ten years, and now she appeared before them a young woman, with a tall, graceful figure, and a brilliant brunette complexion, retaining something in both her countenance and bearing which bespoke her French origin. But though they said they should not have known her, yet they felt that she was all that her fond adopted mother had so frequently described in her letters. There was something about Blanche which plainly bespoke a cultivated and superior intellect, while there was also a gentle calmness and softness of manner that suited well the Christian wife of a Christian minister.

Seated on a low seat, at the far end of the garden, might be seen an elderly mulatto-woman who had accompanied Madame de Tremonille from St. Thomas as her attendant, in consequence of her weak state of health. This was our old friend, widow Moore. Although the past nine years had added somewhat of a stoop to her form and rendered her step less alert, yet the light of her Christian character, that light which if duly trimmed at the altar, can never grow dim, burned yet brighter and clearer.

She was now surrounded by a group of merry children, who were listening with breathless delight, to her tales about her tropical home. Foremost

among this group of children might be seen a tall, thoughtful-looking boy, of apparently about fourteen years of age. To him the others seemed to look up as their counselor-general, watching his countenance to see if he were listening, or perhaps if the good widow were reciting something beyond their youthful comprehension, they would gaze at Francis to see whether they were expected to laugh or cry.

It was not long that Blanche and Mr. Campbell could stay with their American friends, for the latter was impatient to return to the scene of his labors; but it was agreed that Madame de Tremonille should remain at Mow Farm for several months, all hoping that the change of air might restore her to her accustomed health.

To perfect health it certainly did not restore her; but by the following summer she was so much better that she and her faithful attendant once more set off for St. Thomas. There, after two years more of alternate sickness and health—two years more of gentle love and Christian usefulness—she passed away to that rest “which remaineth for the people of God.”

Her remains repose in the little church-yard near those of Beatrice's father; and truly and deeply was she lamented, not only by Blanche and her husband, but by the numerous friends and dependents she left in the island—“Blessed are the dead which

die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Blanche and Mr. Campbell now reside at Palm Hill, pursuing actively the duties of their calling as laborers in the vineyard of their Lord. And here we shall leave them, only trusting that when they too shall have finished the work their Master has for them to do, they may meet around that throne of the Lamb all those dear friends, from whom, as we see, death had been permitted to separate them. And now, too, as even the "best friends must part," we shall say farewell to our friend Beatrice Grey.

We leave her happy in the quiet duties of domestic life, training her little ones up in the service and love of God, and being, as she always has been, her husband's daily joy, and dearest earthly friend. Her path of life was not unchecked by trials; but there were always so many sweet violets growing by the way-side, that it was not other than a happy one.

In her children she was abundantly rewarded, and in none more so than in her adopted son, Francis, who lived to be, as had always been the dearest wish of his heart, an eminent and devoted minister of the Gospel. And by the tender love, and unceasing,

dutiful respect he showed for Walter and Beatrice when a boy, as well as by his future career, so peculiarly blessed and honored, the truth of that word was abundantly proved to them—"Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days."

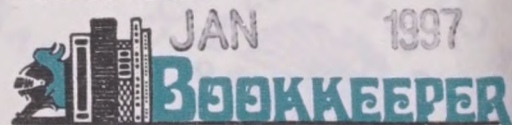
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